تفسیر انوار البیان

3

ILLUMINATING DISCOURSES
on the
NOBLE QURAN

TAFSIR ANWARUL BAYAN

By
Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمة الله عليه

DARUL-ISHAAT
Karachi-Pakistan.

Revised Edition
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By: Mufti Muhammad Aashiq Elahi Muhajir Madani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Volume Three
Part V & VI
Para Twelve to Para Eighteen

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based on *Ma'ariful Quran*

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PART TWELVE

﴿ وَمَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رِزۡقُهَا وَيَعۡلَمُ مُسۡتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسۡتَوۡدَعَهَاۚ كُلّٞ فِي كِتَٰبٖ مُّبِينٖ (6) وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٖ وَكَانَ عَرۡشُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلۡمَآءِ لِيَبۡلُوَكُمۡ أَيُّكُمۡ أَحۡسَنُ عَمَلٗاۗ وَلَئِن قُلۡتَ إِنَّكُم مَّبۡعُوثُونَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِ ٱلۡمَوۡتِ لَيَقُولَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحۡرٞ مُّبِينٞ (7) وَلَئِنۡ أَخَّرۡنَا عَنۡهُمُ ٱلۡعَذَابَ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَّةٖ مَّعۡدُودَةٖ لَّيَقُولُنَّ مَا يَحۡبِسُهُۥٓۗ أَلَا يَوۡمَ يَأۡتِيهِمۡ لَيۡسَ مَصۡرُوفًا عَنۡهُمۡ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ (8)

(6)The responsibility for sustaining every creature on earth rests with Allāh, and He knows their long-term abode and their temporary abode. Everything is in the clear book. (7) It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days when His throne was upon water, to test who of you performed better deeds. Surely if you say, "Indeed you will be resurrected after death," the disbelievers will definitely reply, "This is merely manifest magic." (8) Indeed, if We have to postpone the punishment from them for a little while, they will certainly say, "What holds it back?" Behold! The day when it will afflict them, it will not be averted from them and their mockery will engulf them.

ALLĀH HAS UNDERTAKEN THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE SUSTENANCE TO EVERY CREATURE ON EARTH

Whereas the previous verses discussed Allāh's knowledge, these verses speak of His ability to sustain and create. Allāh says, *"The responsibility for sustaining every creature on earth rests with Allāh..."* Be the creature large or small, an insect or anything else, Allāh shall sustain it. Allāh owes nothing to anyone, but He provides for all out of His mercy.

"...and He knows their long-term abode and their temporary abode." Allāh is aware of the whereabouts and the habitats of all His creation and feeds them wherever they may be. This part of the verse indicates that Allāh's creation have two types of habitats; one temporary, and the other being occupied for a longer period of time. Allāh provides for them in both of these places. It is witnessed daily that people of one continent consume food that is imported from another continent.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from the "Mustadrak" of Hākim that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی اللہ عنہ interpreted the word "Mustaqarr" (translated above as *'long-term abode')* as the womb of the mother, while the second word viz. "Mustawda" meant the circumstances of death. Allāh is aware of the necessity of every member of His creation from its inception until its very end, when it will no longer require any food. Only Allāh knows when and where every person will die and will ensure that he receives his sustenance until then, and at the predetermined place.

NONE WILL DIE WITHOUT RECEIVING THEIR APPORTIONED SUSTENANCE

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی اللہ عنہ has reported that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Indeed Jibr'īl علیہ السلام has cast this in my heart that no soul will die until it has completed the sustenance apportioned to it. So fear Allāh-and seek your sustenance in a proper manner. If sustenance is delayed, then do not seek it in a manner that entails disobedience to Allāh because Allāh's bounty cannot be acquired by any means that constitute disobedience to Him. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 2 p.5 35*]

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "Without doubt, the sustenance of a person follows him like his death follows him." [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, "If any of you tries to flee from his sustenance, it will find him just as his death will." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 2 p.536*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once found a date and picked it up. A beggar then appeared and the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم gave the date to him saying, "Behold! If you had not come to it, it would have come to you." [*Ibid*]

Because of His infinite mercy, Allāh even sustains the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the sinners. The question is often raised about where is the sustenance of those who die of starvation? The reply is simply that they died after depleting their apportioned sustenance. At the time of their deaths, the pre-ordained sustenance because of them was already finished.

Every person receives his full due in this world without stint. It is often seen that people die while eating their final meals. Many people are also given their final sips of water before their deaths. These were part of their sustenance that they had to receive before their deaths.

"It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days." This subject was discussed in verse 54 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) and in the third verse of Surah Yunus (*Surah 10*).

"....when His throne was upon water..." It is evident from this that Allāh's throne and water were created before the heavens and the earth.

".....to test who of you performed better deeds." The creation of the heavens and the earth are sufficient to convince a person of Allāh's greatness. Yet Allāh also

provides people with assistance in times of dire need and such circumstances that add to his conviction in Allāh's presence and majesty. Once a person recognises Allāh, he is spurred on to worship Allāh and devote himself to Allāh. The ranks and stages of people in this regard are varied. Some will, of course, excel others by performing better actions.

By understanding the above paragraph, one will understand the relationship between the two parts of the above verse viz. *"It is He Who created the heavens and the earth in six days..."* and *"- to test who of you performed better deeds."*

In brief, Allāh impresses upon people that He created everything and provided for man on earth. Man should therefore be grateful to Him for all of this and excel in his devotions towards Allāh. The creation of the heavens and the earth is, therefore, a test for man in this way. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 12 p.10*]

QUALITY OF ACTIONS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THEIR QUANTITY

The verse mentions, *". . .to test who of you performed better deeds."* It does not say, *"who of you perform more deeds."* Many Scholars *(Ulama)* have deduced from this that, when performing deeds, the emphasis should be on the quality, of the deeds instead of mere quantity.

To perfect the quality of deeds, two aspects should be noted. The first is that of sincerity i.e. the deed should be performed solely for Allāh's pleasure. The second is that it should be in accordance with the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the absence of either of the two will result in the actions being deficient, irrespective of the quantity.

When Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه was sent by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as governor to Yemen, he requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for some parting advice. He was told, "Be sincere in your religion (D'in), for then even a few actions will suffice." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 1 p.54*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The worst thief is he who steals from his Salāh." When someone asked how it was possible to steal from Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "When a person does not perform his bowing *(Ruku)* and prostration *(Sajdah)* properly." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 1 p.338*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh does not pay any attention to the Salāh in which the back is not straightened between the bowing *(Ruku)* and the prostration *(Sajda)* (i.e. in Qaumah)." [*Ibid*]

These Ahadīth make it clear that the beauty of Salāh lies in its proper performance without haste. This ruling applies to the obligatory *(Fardh)* and the mandatory *(Nafl)* Salāh. This type of performance is better than Performing many rakāhs of Salāh in haste.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has prescribed certain guidelines for the proper performance of Salāh. Of these is that one should not perform Salāh while suppressing the need to relieve oneself, nor while one is extremely hungry and

food has been prepared. The person performing Tahajjud Salāh should not do so when sleep is overpowering him. These needs should be attended to first so that one may perform the Salāh in peace. All other acts of Islām should also be performed in a perfect manner.

Allāh continues to say in the following verse, *"Surely if you say, 'Indeed you will be resurrected after death,' the disbelievers will definitely reply, 'This is merely manifest magic."* Although the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were impressed by the beauty and eloquence of the Qur'ān, they refused to believe in it and brushed it off by saying that it was magic.

"Indeed, if We have to postpone the punishment from them for a little while, they will certainly say, 'What holds it back?" By making this statement, they meant to deny the warnings of punishment in this world. In addition, they also meant to say that the punishment of the Hereafter will also be a farce, since the punishment of this world did not appear.

Allāh tells them, *"Behold! The day when it will afflict them, it will not be averted from them and their mockery will engulf them."* When the punishment will overtake them at the hour appointed by Allāh, then they will have no escape. It will be then that they will realise the folly of their ways and see the result of their mockery.

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَٰهَا مِنْهُ إِنَّهُۥ لَيَـُٔوسٌ كَفُورٌ ﴿٩﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَٰهُ نَعْمَآءَ بَعْدَ ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتُ عَنِّىٓ إِنَّهُۥ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ ﴿١٠﴾ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

(9) Undoubtedly, if We allow man to taste of Our mercy and then snatch it away from him, he will certainly be despondent and ungrateful (10) Undoubtedly, if We allow him to taste of any bounty after an adversity has afflicted him, he will certainly say, "All difficulties have left me!" Indeed he then becomes boastful and arrogant. (11) Except those who adopt patience and do good deeds. For them shall be forgiveness and an immense reward.

DESPONDENCY, INGRATITUDE, CONCEIT AND ARROGANCE ARE PART OF MAN'S PSYCHE

Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, if We allow man to taste of Our mercy and then snatch it away from him, he will certainly be despondent and ungrateful."* Instead of being grateful for the bounty that was once his and looking forward to another spate of good fortune, man loses hope of ever receiving another good turn. He neither shows gratitude for the favour that he has just lost, nor of any others that he may be enjoying at the time. He bewails and laments what he has lost and is never patient.

Describing another aspect of man's behaviour, Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly, if*

We allow him to taste of any bounty after an adversity has afflicted him, he will certainly say, 'All difficulties have left me!' Indeed he then becomes boastful and arrogant." In his revelry, he forgets that every bounty can be lost. He boasts of these to others and considers himself superior to them, as if these bounties were attained through his own efforts.

There are exceptions to every situation. Allāh then mentions those people who are exceptions to the above by saying, *"Except those who adopt patience and do good deeds."* They patiently bear the loss of any fortune and face any difficulty with the same fortitude and tolerance. Instead of mourning and lamenting, they occupy themselves in righteous deeds, thereby expressing gratitude to Allāh.

Such people never lose hope in Allāh's mercy, never boast about their fortunes and never look down upon those who are less fortunate. Allāh promises them, *"For them shall be forgiveness and an immense reward."*

فَلَعَلَّكَ تَارِكٌ بَعْضَ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَضَآئِقٌ بِهِۦ صَدْرُكَ أَن يَقُولُوا لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ
كَنزٌ أَوْ جَآءَ مَعَهُۥ مَلَكٌ ۚ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ نَذِيرٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٢﴾ أَمْ
يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَىٰهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوَرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ مُفْتَرَيَٰتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن
دُونِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَإِلَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ فَاعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللَّهِ
وَأَن لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

(12) It should not be that you ignore some of the commands that have been revealed to you, nor that your heart grieves because they say, "Why is a treasure not sent down to him or an angel not accompany him?" You are but a warner, and Allāh has control over all things. (13) Or do they say, "He has fabricated it." Say, "Produce ten fabricated Surahs the like thereof and, besides Allāh, call whomsoever you can if you are truthful" (14) If they do not respond to you, then be assured that this has been revealed according to Allāh's knowledge, and that there is no deity besides Allāh. So will you accept Islām?

THE REJECTERS ARE CHALLENGED TO PRODUCE TEN SURAHS LIKE THOSE OF THE QUR'ĀN

The beginning of the Surah describes the attributes of Allāh, followed by a brief discussion of resurrection. Allāh also describes the psychology of man, as well as invitations to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and the Prophethood of Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* refuse to accept and continue to make absurd statements to defend their stance. One of these is mentioned in the above verses.

Allāh says, *'it should not be that you ignore some of the commands that have been revealed to you* [to please the disbelievers *(kuffār)*], *nor that your heart grieves because they say, 'Why is a treasure not sent down to him or an angel not accompany him?"'* Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that these people should not affect him,

because *"You are but a Warner, and Allāh has control over all things."*

The responsibility of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to convey the message. Allāh would decide whether He wished to comply with the demands of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* when they requested certain miracles to be displayed. The greatest miracle (viz, the Qur'ān) has already been manifested before their eyes. However, they say regarding the Qur'ān, *"He has fabricated it."*

Allāh replies by saying, *"Say, 'Produce ten fabricated Surahs the like thereof and, besides Allāh, call whomsoever you can (to assist you) if you are truthful."* Allāh challenges them to reproduce the like of just ten chapters of the Qur'ān. If they claim that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fabricated the Qur'ān, they should then naturally be able to write a Qur'ān of much better content since they were regarded to be the most eloquent and lucid linguists. This challenge has not been met until today.

The challenge was then simplified to reproducing one Surah (as has passed in verse 23 of Surah Baqarah), but this too remains unchallenged. The truth of the matter is that the Qur'ān is a living miracle and none can ever match it.

Allāh then says, *"If they do not respond to you* (i.e. to the challenge), *then be assured that* (their claim to the fabrication of the Qur'ān is false and that) *this has been revealed according to Allāh's knowledge, and that there is no deity besides Allāh. So* (after the truth has been made manifest before you) *will you accept Islām?"*

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ
﴿15﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارُ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُواْ فِيهَا وَبَٰطِلٌ مَّا
كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿16﴾ أَفَمَن كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْهُ وَمِن
قَبْلِهِۦ كِتَٰبُ مُوسَىٰٓ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِۦ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِۦ مِنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ
فَٱلنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُۥ فَلَا تَكُ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ إِنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿17﴾

(15) Whoever desires the life of this world and its splendour, We shall grant them the full recompense for their deeds in this very world and they will not be wronged. (16) They are the ones who shall have only the Fire for themselves in the Hereafter. Whatever they did in the world will be lost to them and all their deeds will be in vain. (17) Whoever is steadfast on the Qur'ān from his Lord, that is followed by a witness from it and preceded by the Book of Mūsa as a leader and a mercy. These people believe in it. Whoever rejects it from the groups, then the Fire is his promised abode. So do not be in doubt about it. It is indeed the truth from your Lord, but most people do not know.

THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* WILL BE GRANTED REWARDS FOR THEIR DEEDS IN THIS WORLD NO REWARD IN THE HEREAFTER

The first of the above verses describes the condition of those people who desire only the life of this world. All their actions and motives are centred around the acquisition of this world, and they have no consciousness of the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"We shall grant them the full recompense for their deeds in this very world and they will not be wronged."*

As far as their plight in the Hereafter is concerned, Allāh says, *"They are the ones who shall have only the Fire for themselves in the Hereafter. Whatever they did in the world will be lost to them and all their deeds will be in vain.* " This will be the end of all their deeds, even though these seemed virtuous in this world.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No deed of a believer *(Mu'min)* will be reduced in reward. Allāh will grant him the reward for it in this world as well as in the Hereafter. However, whatever deeds the disbeliever *(kāfir)* does for Allāh's pleasure, will be rewarded only in this world. In the Hereafter he will have no deeds left to be rewarded." [*Muslim*]

Many disbelievers *(kuffār)* carry out extremely worthy actions in this world such as building hospitals and other beneficial institutions. When they hear from Muslims that they will not be rewarded and will still be subjected to eternal punishment in the Hereafter, they say that they also accept a god for whom they carry out these actions. Therefore, they ask, why should they be punished? The reply is given very simply that their rewards will be granted in this world and the punishment in the Hereafter will be because of their disbelief *(kufr)*.

A REPLY TO AN IGNORANT QUESTION

Certain unwary Muslims complain that all Muslims are suffering, while the disbelievers *(kuffār)* all seem to be enjoying themselves. At the outset one may comment that all Muslims are not suffering, while all the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are not enjoying good fortune. Secondly, it should be understood that no disbeliever *(kāfir)* will enjoy any good fortune in the Hereafter, while the rewards of Muslims will be stored for them there. Then too, the believer *(Mu'minīn)* are rewarded for the patience they exercise during every difficulty.

All these factors must be understood. Only then will Muslims be saved from making the ludicrous statement that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* have all the luxuries, while the Muslims have only promises to console themselves. Such statements constitute objections against Allāh, and will lead one to disbelief *(kufr)*.

Once Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was lying on a straw mat, which left impressions on his body. He was resting his head against a leather pillow filled with the bark of date palms. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه commented, "O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, make supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh that He grants your Ummah affluence. The Romans and the Persians enjoy abundant wealth whilst they do not worship Allāh."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "O son of Khattāb! Are you still

deceived? These are the people who are granted luxuries only in this world." According to another narration, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do you not prefer that they receive these luxuries in this world and we receive them in the Hereafter?" [*Mishkāt p.447*]

Thereafter Allāh says, *"Whoever is steadfast on the Qur'ān from his Lord, that is followed by a witness from it..."* The eloquence of the Qur'ān is in itself a witness to the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. Another witness is the previous scripture given to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام which foretold the advent of the Qur'ān.

Allāh says, *"and preceded by the Book of Mūsa as a leader and a mercy."* Many of the injunctions contained in the Qur'ān were also present in the Torah, informing people of the rewards of various deeds and instructing them in religion *(D'īn)*. For this reason it was also a mercy to them. The verse tells us that the person who is steadfast on this perfect Qur'ān, is steadfast upon a great truth and can never be equated to a person who rejects the Qur'ān.

"These people believe in it." According to certain commentators, this part of the verse refers to the companion رضى الله عنهم, while others are of the opinion that all believer *(Mu'minīn)* are implied.

Allāh explains further, *"Whoever rejects it from the groups, then the Fire is his promised abode. So do not be in doubt about it. It is indeed the truth from your Lord, but most people do not know."* This explains that all other groups besides the Muslims will be entered into the fire of Hell, irrespective of their deeds in this world.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I swear by the Being in Whose control is the life of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Any person, be he a Jew or a Christian, who dies without believing in the religion *(D'īn)* with which I have been sent, will be of the dwellers of Hell if the knowledge of my Prophethood had reached him." [*Muslim*]

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُولُ
الْأَشْهَادُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿18﴾
الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿19﴾
أُولَٰئِكَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا مُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ
يُضَاعَفُ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ ۚ مَا كَانُوا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ السَّمْعَ وَمَا كَانُوا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿20﴾
أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿21﴾ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ
فِي الْآخِرَةِ هُمُ الْأَخْسَرُونَ ﴿22﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَخْبَتُوا
إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿23﴾ ۞ مَثَلُ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ
كَالْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْأَصَمِّ وَالْبَصِيرِ وَالسَّمِيعِ ۚ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿24﴾

(18) Who can be more unjust than he who invents lies against Allāh? These people will be presented before their Lord, and the witnesses will say, "These are the ones who attributed lies to their Lord!' Behold! The curse of Allāh be on the liars... (19) Those who prevented from Allāh's path, sought crookedness in it, and disbelieved in the Hereafter. (20) Such people are not likely to escape on earth, and they shall not have any allies besides Allāh. Their punishment will be doubled. They have neither the ability to hear, nor can they see. (21) These are the ones who have ruined themselves and whatever (gods) they fabricated will be lost to them. (22) Without doubt, they will be the worst losers in the Hereafter! (23)Surely those who believe, do righteous deeds and bow to their Lord, these are the dwellers of Heaven (Jannah), in which they shall abide forever. (24)The example of the two groups is like that of the (person who is) blind and the deaf and he who can see and hear. Can the two be equated? Will you not take heed?

ALLĀH'S CURSE IS ON THE OPPRESSORS, WHILE THE BELIEVERS WILL BE REWARDED WITH HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*

The Polytheists attributed partners to Allāh and, when they were admonished, they said, *"These are our intercessors with Allāh."* Sometimes they replied, *"We only worship them so that they may draw us close to Allāh"* . In fact, these beliefs were in diametrically opposed to what Allāh taught them via His Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, they actually invented lies against Allāh by claiming to hold these beliefs as part of their religion *(D'īn)*.

In this regard Allāh says, *"Who can be more unjust than he who invents lies against Allāh?"* Thereafter, explaining their humiliation on the Day of Judgement, Allāh says, *"These people will be presented before their Lord, and the witnesses will say, 'These are the ones who attributed lies to their Lord."* Commentators mention that the witnesses will be the Prophets عليهم السلام, the angels and the delievers *(Mu'minīn)*. Others are of the opinion that these will be the limbs of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

The witnesses will add further, *"Behold! The curse of Allāh be on the liars. Those who prevented (others) from Allāh's path, sought crookedness (i.e. tried to find faults) in it, and disbelieved in the Hereafter."*

Regarding their plight Allāh says, *"Such people are not likely to escape on earth..."* They can never escape Allāh nor death wherever they may hide on earth, and certainly they cannot escape from Him in the Hereafter. Allāh adds, *"and they shall not have any allies besides Allāh."* Those whom they thought would intercede for them will not be able to come to their aid.

"Their punishment will be doubled." They will be punished for remaining disbelievers *(kuffār)*, as well as for preventing others from accepting Islām.

"They have neither the ability to hear, nor can they see." They exert themselves to escape listening to the discourses of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and turn a blind eye to the signs of Allāh's greatness present in themselves and in other creation.

"These are the ones who have ruined themselves..." They have bartered guidance for the despicable price of deviation and the bliss of the Hereafter for

the pittance of this world.

The question arises that personal ruin would mean destruction of the soul, but the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are seen to be existing in this world, and will be existing in the Hereafter as well. What is then the meaning of ruination? The reply is that the existence of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* in the Hereafter will be worse than death. The soul that is subjected to the eternal damnation of the Hereafter will be thoroughly ruined, and cannot be termed as a soul. This is why Allāh says, *"Then he will not die therein (in Hell), nor will he live."* [*Surah A'lā (87), verse*]

Thereafter Allāh says, *".....and whatever (gods) they fabricated will be lost to them."* Their false gods will not be able to intercede for them, nor assist them in any way whatsoever.

Allāh then declares, *"Without doubt, they will be the worst losers in the Hereafter!"*

After mentioning the plight of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, Allāh speaks of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says, *"Surely those who believe, do righteous deeds and bow to their Lord, these are the dwellers of Heaven (Jannah), in which they shall abide forever."*

"The example of the two groups is like that of the (person who is) blind and the deaf and he who can see and hear." The first person is the disbeliever *(kāfir)* and the second is the believer *(Mu'min)*. Allāh asks, *"Can the two be equated?"* The reply is that they can obviously never be the same.

"Will you not take heed?" Just as all consider the blind and deaf person to be unfortunate in this world, they should consider the disbelievers *(kuffār)* just as unfortunate in both the worlds.

Note: Just as the disbeliever *(kāfir)* will be humiliated in the Hereafter, the believer *(Mu'min)* will be honoured. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "The believer *(Mu'min)* will be drawn close to Allāh on the Day of Judgement. Allāh will conceal his sins and he will admit to them all. He will think that he would be destroyed (on account of his sins). Allāh will then tell him, 'I have concealed your sins in the world. Today I will forgive them all." He will then receive his record of deeds [in his right hand, as a sign of entering Heaven *(Jannah)*]. As for the disbeliever *(kāfir)* and the hypocrite *(Munāfiq)*, *"the witnesses will say, 'These are the ones who attributed lies to their Lord.' Behold! The curse of Allāh be on the liars."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p.330*]

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنِّى لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ أَن لَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّا ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِن قَوْمِهِۦ مَا نَرَىٰكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مِّثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَىٰكَ ٱتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِىَ ٱلرَّأْىِ

وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَٰذِبِينَ ﴿27﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ
عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَءَاتَىٰنِي رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِهِۦ فَعُمِّيَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنُلْزِمُكُمُوهَا وَأَنتُمْ لَهَا كَٰرِهُونَ
﴿28﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ لَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَالًا ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ بِطَارِدِ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّلَٰقُوا۟ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَٰكِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿29﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ مَن يَنصُرُنِي
مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِن طَرَدتُّهُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿30﴾ وَلَآ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِي خَزَآئِنُ ٱللَّهِ وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ
ٱلْغَيْبَ وَلَآ أَقُولُ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ وَلَآ أَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ تَزْدَرِيٓ أَعْيُنُكُمْ لَن يُؤْتِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ خَيْرًا ۖ ٱللَّهُ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِيٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ إِنِّيٓ إِذًا لَّمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿31﴾

(25) Indeed We sent Nūh to his nation. (He told them) "Undoubtedly I am unto you a clear warner... (26) .... That you worship only Allāh. I truly fear for you the punishment of a torturous day." (27) The disbelieving leaders of his nation said, "We consider you to be a mere human like ourselves and we see that only those people follow you who are of low class and who are simple minded. We see no superiority in you over us. In fact, we deem you to be liars." (28) Nūh replied, "O my people! Tell me. (What) If I am upon a proof from my Lord and He has granted me a mercy from Himself that is not shown to you? Can we force it onto you when you disapprove of it?" (29) "O my people! I do not ask you for any wealth. My reward is with my Lord, and I cannot discard those who believe. Surely, they will meet their Lord, but I deem you all to be ignorant." (30) "O my people! Who will assist me against Allāh if I discard them? Will you not take heed?" (31) "I do not say to you that I possess the treasures of Allāh, nor do I have knowledge of the unseen, nor do I say that I am an angel and I cannot say concerning those whom you look down upon that Allāh will never grant them good. Allāh knows best what is in their hearts. If I do so, then I will certainly be of the oppressors."

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام PREACHES TO HIS NATION AND THEY STUBBORNLY OPPOSE HIM

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام appeared a thousand years after Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. His people were idolaters and he pleaded with them to stop. His story was discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 59-64*], where the commentary quoted several verses related to his episode. The above verses cite additional facts.

In the above verses Allāh says that he told the people, *"Undoubtedly I am unto you a clear warner. That you only worship Allāh.* (If you do not accept, then) *I truly fear for you the punishment of a torturous day."*

Instead of accepting what he said, *"The disbelieving leaders of his nation* (the leaders are normally in the forefront of opposition in any nation) said, *'We consider you to be a mere human like ourselves..."* They argued that he was just like the rest of them and, therefore, they saw no reason why he should be considered to be the Prophets عليهم السلام.

In addition to this they protested, "..... *we see that only those people follow you who are of low class and who are simple minded.*" They argued that his followers simply followed him without thought. Therefore, their following provided no incentive for the rest of the people to follow.

The third argument they tendered was *"We see no superiority in you over us. In fact, we deem you to be liars."*

In response to their allegations, *"Nūh* عليه السلام *replied, 'O my people! Tell me. (What) If I am upon a proof from my Lord and He has granted me a mercy (The Prophethood) from Himself that is not shown to you (then what can I do?). Can we force it onto you when you disapprove of it?"* The responsibility of the Prophet is merely to convey the message, not to compel people into submission.

He continued to impress upon their minds that the objective of his preaching was not to attain the wealth of this world. Therefore, he told them, "O *my people! I do not ask you for any wealth. My reward is with my Lord...*" They ought to realise that if a person is exerting himself so tirelessly without any worldly objective, there should be some virtue in his responsibility.

The leaders of his nation desired that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام disassociate himself from those followers who belonged to the low social class. For this reason he told them, "*. . . and I cannot discard those who believe. Surely, they will meet their Lord...*" Because of their Belief or faith *(Imān)*, they have been accepted in the presence of Allāh and He will reward them in the Hereafter.

He then told them, *"but I deem you all to be ignorant."* Instead of believing in the truth and acquiring the eternal success of the Hereafter, they chose the paltry gains of this world.

"O my people! Who will assist me against Allāh if I discard them? Will you not take heed?" Disassociating from those close to Allāh will draw His wrath, from which none can offer any security. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 12 p.41*) writes that they wanted him to disassociate from those followers who belonged to a lower social class, even though they never mentioned this directly. They prescribed this as a precondition for their belief *(Imān)*.

The people thought that it was necessary that the Prophets عليهم السلام possess abundant wealth-as a sign of his Prophethood. However, excessive wealth is not a sign of acceptance and proximity to Allāh. Similarly possessing knowledge of the unseen is also not a condition for a person to be the Prophet of Allāh. For this reason Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام told the people, *"I do not say to you that I possess the treasures of Allāh, nor do I have knowledge of the unseen..."*

When they said earlier, *'We consider you to be a mere human like ourselves,"* they meant to say that the Prophet should be someone better than a human. In reply to this objection, he told them, *"nor do I say that I am an angel..."* Apostleship is not dependant on any of the above conditions. Therefore, it will be foolish to reject the Prophet on any of these grounds.

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* of his nation referred to Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام followers as *"simple minded"* they indicated that these people were not staunch in their belief. In reply to this, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام told them, *"and I cannot say concerning those whom you look down upon that Allāh will never grant them*

good. *Allāh knows best what is in their hearts."* Allāh will grant them the reward for their Belief *(Imān)* because the criterion is sincerity and not social standing and wealth.

"If I do so, then I will certainly be of the oppressors." In this way he would be oppressing himself as well as these believers *(Mu'minīn)* by according precedence to worldly positions.

WORLDLY WEALTH AND POSITION ARE NOT INDICATIONS OF PROXIMITY TO ALLĀH

It is the general misconception of people that they regard those of affluence and noble worldly standing to be superior to the rest even though they may be deficient in morals, character, knowledge and beliefs. This type of behaviour is indeed reprehensible because the wealth of this world is temporary and a person may lose it at any time.

It has been the trend with all the Prophets عليهم السلام that the poor and the lower classes were always the first to follow them. The affluent always considered their own opinion to be worthy of being heeded. They would think that something cannot be true if it were accepted by the poor people as such. Allāh says in Surah Ahqāf, *"The disbelievers say to the believers, 'If this (faith) were good, you people would have never beaten us to it."* [*Surah 46, verse 11*]

The same situation prevailed with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Initially, the nobles of the Quraysh opposed him and refused to accept him. The poor Companions رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Khabbāb رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Suhaib رضى الله عنه were among the first to accept his message. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent a letter to the Caesar of Rome, he summoned those Arabs who were then present in Rome. Of those who were ushered to his court was Abu Sufyan (who was not yet a Muslim at that time).

One of the many questions that the Caesar posed to them was whether the followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were the nobles or those of more humble status. When Abu Sufyān replied that they waive generally people of the poorer class, the Caesar said, "This is what normally happens with the the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام. (Their initial followers are generally those of the lower class)."

Another question was whether any of the followers of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم turned apostate after accepting Islām. When Abu Sufyan replied in the negative, the Caesar said, "This is what happens once the magnificence of Belief *(Imān)* enters the heart."

This situation prevails even today. Leaders and statesmen who call themselves Muslims look down upon those who are engaged in the services of religion *(D'īn)*, like the Imām, Mu'adhdhins *(Adhān caller)* and poor worshippers. This is because they consider them to belong to an inferior class. They consider themselves to be superior despite the fact that they are sinners and oppressors. May Allāh guide them all. Āmīn.

قَالُوا يَٰنُوحُ قَدْ جَٰدَلْتَنَا فَأَكْثَرْتَ جِدَٰلَنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَآ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ

(32) They said, "O Nūh.' You have disputed with us and disputed to a great extent. So bring forth what you promise us if you are of the truthful ones." (33) He said, "Only Allāh will bring it if He wills, and you will be unable to escape." (34) "My advice to you shall not benefit you if I intend to advise you while Allāh intends to send you astray. He is your Lord and to Him shall you be returned."

THE REPLY OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام WHEN HIS PEOPLE GREW MORE REBELLIOUS AND DEMANDED ALLĀH'S PUNISHMENT

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام preached to his people for 950 years, but they refused to accept. Once they even told him, *"O Nūh! You have disputed with us and disputed to a great extent. So bring forth what you promise us if you are of the truthful ones."*

"He said, 'Only Allāh will bring it if He wills, and you will be unable to escape.'" The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام only warns people of the imminent punishment, but cannot cause it to come. Only Allāh can bring the punishment.

He also told them, *"My advice to you shall not benefit you if I intend to advise you while Allāh intends to send you astray. He is your Lord and to Him shall you be returned."* Eventually, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام invoked Allāh to afflict them with a punishment, and they were destroyed by a great flood. The details will soon follow.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ قُلْ إِنِ ٱفْتَرَيْتُهُۥ فَعَلَىَّ إِجْرَامِى وَأَنَا۠ بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) Or do they say that he fabricated it? Say, "If I had fabricated it, then the crime is mine and I am absolved of the crime that you perpetrate."

THE REPLY TO THOSE WHO CLAIMED THAT THE QUR'ĀN WAS A FABRICATION OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Certain commentators are of the opinion that this verse is part of the allegations that the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام made against him. Allāh instructed him to reply to them by saying, *"If I had fabricated it, then the crime is mine and I am absolved of the crime that you perpetrate."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" maintains this view and "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has also reported it from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه.

Other commentators state that the verse refers to the allegation made by the polytheists of Makkah that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم fabricated the Qur'ān.

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell them that *"If I had fabricated it, then the crime is mine and I am absolved of the crime that you perpetrate."* They will have to suffer the consequences of their disbelief *(kufr)*. Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has preferred this interpretation and writes (*v. 2 p.444*) that this verse appears incidentally within the discussion of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

وَأُوحِيَ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ أَنَّهُۥ لَن يُؤْمِنَ مِن قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا مَن قَدْ ءَامَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿36﴾ وَٱصْنَعِ ٱلْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَـٰطِبْنِى فِى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿37﴾ وَيَصْنَعُ ٱلْفُلْكَ وَكُلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِۦ سَخِرُوا۟ مِنْهُ ۚ قَالَ إِن تَسْخَرُوا۟ مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ ﴿38﴾ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿39﴾

(36) It was revealed to Nūh, "None shall ever believe from your people besides those who have already believed, so do not be grieved by what they do." (37) "Build an ark before Us and by Our command and do not address Me regarding the oppressors. They shall certainly be drowned." (38) He continued to build the ark. Whenever the leaders of his people passed by him, they mocked him. He said, "If you mock us, then we shall also mock you, just as you do to us... (39) Soon you shall come to know who will be afflicted by a humiliating punishment and to whom shall an eternal punishment come."

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام IS COMMANDED TO BUILD AN ARK AND THE LEADERS OF HIS NATION MOCK HIM

Eventually, only a few people believed in Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Before sending the punishment, Allāh instructed him to construct an ark in to rescue the believers. Allāh says, *'It was revealed to Nūh, 'None shall ever believe from your people besides those who have already believed, so do not be grieved by what they do."* One should not grieve over something that cannot be expected.

Allāh instructed him further, *"Build an ark before Us and by Our command and do not address Me regarding the oppressors. They shall certainly be drowned."*

Hence according to Allāh's command, *"He continued to build the ark."* He constructed the ark from planks of wood and nails. Allāh says in Surah Qamar, *"We carried him [Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام] on an ark of planks and nails. "*[*Surah 56, verse* 13]

"*Whenever the leaders of his people passed by him, they mocked him."* They laughed and told him, *"Will you be rescued with this?"* At times they teased him saying, *"How will this move on land?"* They also teased him by saying, *"You were once the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام, but have now become a carpenter?"*

"He said, 'If you mock us, then (the day will dawn when) we shall also mock you, just as you do to us. Soon you shall come to know who will be afflicted by a humiliating

punishment and to whom shall an eternal punishment come.

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ ٱلتَّنُّورُ قُلْنَا ٱحْمِلْ فِيهَا مِن كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ
إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْقَوْلُ وَمَنْ ءَامَنَ ۚ وَمَآ ءَامَنَ مَعَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ ۞ وَقَالَ ٱرْكَبُوا۟
فِيهَا بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ مَجْر۪ىٰهَا وَمُرْسَىٰهَآ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾ وَهِىَ تَجْرِى بِهِمْ فِى مَوْجٍ
كَٱلْجِبَالِ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ ٱبْنَهُۥ وَكَانَ فِى مَعْزِلٍ يَـٰبُنَىَّ ٱرْكَب مَّعَنَا وَلَا تَكُن مَّعَ
ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ سَـَٔاوِىٓ إِلَىٰ جَبَلٍ يَعْصِمُنِى مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ ۚ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ مِنْ
أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ ۚ وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا ٱلْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُغْرَقِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(40) Until (the time came when) Our command came and water began to gush from the oven. We said, "Load upon the ark a pair (male and female) from every species and your family; except him against whom the decision has been passed. (And also load) whoever has believed. Only a few believed in him." (41) He said, "Embark thereupon.' With the name of Allāh shall it travel and anchor. Surely my Lord is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful" (42) And it travelled with them and waves the size of mountains. Nūh عليه السلام called unto his son who was standing detached from them saying, "O my, beloved son! Board with us and do not be of the disbelievers!" (43) He replied, "I shall shortly take refuge on a mountain that will rescue me from the water." Nūh عليه السلام said, "Today none can rescue from the command of Allāh except him whom Allāh has mercy upon." Then a wave separated the two and he became of those who were drowned.

THE FLOODS, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DISBELIEVERS AND SALVATION OF THE BELIEVERS

When the ark was completed and the floods were imminent, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام thus, *"Load upon the ark a pair (male and female) from every species (so that they may later reproduce and continue their species) and your family; except him against whom the decision has been passed."* One of the sons of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and one of his wives did not believe him and were destined to be drowned along with the rest of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

"(And also load) whoever has believed. Only a few believed in him." None of the accounts stating their number is established from conclusive sources. It has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that they numbered 70, males and females included. Of these were three sons of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and their wives. One of the wives of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام was among the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and was destined to enter Hell *(Jahannam)*, as mentioned in verse 10 of Surah Tahrīm (Surah 66).

According to some, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had two wives. The one was a disbeliever and was drowned, while the other was a believer and was rescued

with them on the ark. Intercession was not permitted for any of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, because Allāh had already instructed Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, *"Do not address Me regarding the oppressors."*

Certain commentators mention that the sign which indicated to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام that the floods were about to begin was when *"water began to gush from the oven."* Of course, all the floodwaters did not come from the oven because Allāh says in Surah Qamar, *"So We opened up the doors of the sky to torrential rains. And We cleaved springs in the earth so that the waters met for a matter preordained.* The waters of the skies and the earth thus destroyed the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"Certainly, when the floodwaters surged, We carried you on a boat so as to make it a reminder for you and so that attentive ears may remember it."* [*Surah 69, verses 11, 12*]

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام told the believers, *"Embark thereupon! With the name of Allāh shall it travel and anchor. Surely my Lord is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* Certain commentators have mentioned that whenever Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام wished to stop the ark while sailing, he would say, "Bismillah! (With the name of Allāh!" and he would repeat this when he wished to resume the journey.

Also as a reminder of Allāh's remembrance *(dhikr)*, Allāh advised Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام by saying, *"When you and those with you have settled on board the ark, then say, 'All praise be to Allāh Who has saved us from the oppressive folk.*

Further encouraging them to supplicate to Him, Allāh also told them, *"And say, 'My Lord! Settle me on a blessed settlement and You are the best of those who settle (others).*

ONE OF THE SONS OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام IS TRAPPED IN THE WAVES

"And it travelled with them and waves the size of mountains. Nūh called unto his son who was standing detached from them saying, 'O my beloved son! Board with us and do not be of disbelievers!"

Thinking that the flood was like any other, *"He replied, 'I shall shortly take refuge on a mountain that will rescue me from the water."* Since he was not a believer, he failed to understand that none could escape Allāh's punishment.

Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام said to him, *"Today none can rescue from the command of Allāh except him whom Allāh has mercy upon."*

However, Allāh does not show His mercy to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. *Consequently, "a wave separated the two and he became of those who were drowned."*

وَقِيلَ يَٰٓأَرۡضُ ٱبۡلَعِي مَآءَكِ وَيَٰسَمَآءُ أَقۡلِعِي وَغِيضَ ٱلۡمَآءُ وَقُضِيَ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ وَٱسۡتَوَتۡ عَلَى
ٱلۡجُودِيِّۖ وَقِيلَ بُعۡدٗا لِّلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٞ رَّبَّهُۥ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ٱبۡنِي مِنۡ
أَهۡلِي وَإِنَّ وَعۡدَكَ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَأَنتَ أَحۡكَمُ ٱلۡحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ يَٰنُوحُ إِنَّهُۥ لَيۡسَ مِنۡ أَهۡلِكَۖ

إِنَّهُۥ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَٰلِحٍ فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ إِنِّىٓ أَعِظُكَ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّىٓ أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْـَٔلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِى بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِى وَتَرْحَمْنِىٓ أَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ قِيلَ يَٰنُوحُ ٱهْبِطْ بِسَلَٰمٍ مِّنَّا وَبَرَكَٰتٍ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰٓ أُمَمٍ مِّمَّن مَّعَكَ وَأُمَمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمْ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

(44) The order was issued, "O Earth! Swallow your water and O sky! Stop!" The water subsided, the decision was passed and the ark settled on the Mount of Judi. It was announced, "May the oppressive nation be distanced." (45) Nūh عليه السلام called unto his Lord saying, "O my Lord! Surely my son is from my family and indeed Your promise is true and You are the Best of Judges." (46) Allāh said, "O Nūh! Indeed he was not from your family. His actions were certainly incorrect, so do not ask Me regarding that which you have no knowledge. I advise you not to be of the ignorant." (47) Nūh عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! I seek refuge with You that I ask You concerning that which I have no knowledge. If You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I will be of the losers." (48) It was commanded, "O Nūh! Disembark with peace from Us and blessings upon you and upon those parties with you. And there are many such parties to whom We will grant enjoyment and then subject them to a torturous punishment thereafter."

THE STORM ABATES AND THE ARK SETTLES ON THE MOUNTAIN OF JUDI

The floodwaters were so powerful that they swept above the peaks of the highest mountains. None were saved except those aboard the ark. According to certain reports, the ark remained afloat for 150 days, whilst other reports indicate that the period was six months. Only Allāh knows what was the exact period. Nevertheless, when Allāh decreed the end of the flood *"The order was issued, 'O Earth! Swallow your water and O Sky! Stop!' The water subsided, the decision was passed* (that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were to be destroyed) *and the ark settled on the Mount of Judi. It was announced* (from Allāh), *'May the oppressive nation be distanced* (from Allāh's mercy)."

According to certain commentators, the ark rested on the mountain for a month before Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام felt it was safe to permit anyone to disembark. The names of his three sons whose progenies spread on earth after the flood were Sām, Hām and Yāfith.

Thereafter, with regard to the fourth son who drowned, *"Nūh called unto his Lord saying, 'O my Lord! Surely my son is from my family and indeed Your promise is true and You are the Best of Judges."* He said this because Allāh had promised him that his family would be rescued from the punishment.

Keeping in mind proper etiquette, he did not directly ask Allāh to save his son, but phrased the supplication differently. At this juncture, the question is raised that why did Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام make this request for his disbeliever *(kāfir)* son when he knew well that Allāh's promise was to rescue only the

believers? Among the various replies given, Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام made supplication *(du'ā)* in words similar to, "O Allāh! I realise that my son was not worthy of being rescued because of his disbelief *(kufr)*. However, my plea to You is that You make him a believer so that he may be rescued."

In response to his supplication, *'Allāh said, 'O Nūh! Indeed he was not from your family."* In the eternal knowledge of Allāh, he was not destined to be of those family members who were to be rescued. Allāh said further, *"His actions were certainly incorrect..."* He was of those people whose actions denoted that they will remain steadfast upon disbelief *(kufr)* and die in the same condition.

Allāh continues to chide him by saying, *"so do not ask me regarding that which you have no knowledge."* i.e. While you may think that he could have believed, the eternal fate predetermined by Allāh dictated otherwise. Therefore, *"I advise you not to be of the ignorant."*

Realizing his folly, *"Nūh said, 'O my Lord! I seek refuge with You that I ask You concerning that which I have no knowledge. If You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I will be of the losers."*

At this juncture another question is raised. The question is that if this supplication of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and Allāh's reply took place after the son was drowned, why did he supplicate? It is obvious that after his death he cannot possibly be saved. Another question is that if the supplication was made before the son died and Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام has already then received Allāh's reply that the boy would die as a disbeliever *(kāfir)*, why did he still summon his son to believe and board the ark?

In my humble opinion, the above discourse between Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and Allāh took place after his son said *"I shall shortly take refuge on a mountain that will rescue me from the water,"* but before he was washed away by a wave. During that period, Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had no knowledge that his son would be drowned. In this case, the command *"Do not address Me regarding the oppressors"* would mean that none should request for the salvation of such a infidel *(kāfir)* who was destined to die upon infidelity *(kufr)*. And Allāh knows best.

THE BELIEVERS DISEMBARK IN PEACE

After the ark had settled on the mountain of Judi, *"It was commanded, 'O Nūh! Disembark with peace from Us and blessings upon you and upon those parties with you. And there are many such parties* (who will forsake their Belief *(Imān)* and) *to whom We will grant enjoyment and then subject them to a torturous punishment thereafter."* The believers *(Mu'minīn)* with Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were informed from then that although all of them were believers, there will soon appear such people who will forsake their belief and resort to disbelief *(kufr)* once again.

تِلْكَ مِنْ أَنبَاءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهَآ إِلَيْكَ ۖ مَا كُنتَ تَعْلَمُهَآ أَنتَ وَلَا قَوْمُكَ مِن قَبْلِ هَـٰذَا ۖ فَٱصْبِرْ ۖ
إِنَّ ٱلْعَـٰقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

(49) This narrative is from the accounts of the unseen that We inspire you with. You and your people were unlikely to have knowledge about this from before. So be patient.' Indeed the final outcome will be in favour of the pious.

THE INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام AND HIS NATION IS A LESSON FOR OTHERS AND A PROOF OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

After narrating the incident of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"This narrative is from the accounts of the unseen that We inspire to you* [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم *with. You and your people were unlikely to have knowledge about this from before."* The fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never studied matters such as these, nor was he able to read indicates to any thinking person that the news of these events could have come only from Allāh.

Allāh then tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the moral of the above incident should give him courage. Allāh exhorts him to, *"be patient* (because) *Indeed the final outcome will be in favour of the pious."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Companions رضى الله عنهم were soon to gain victory over the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and polytheists.

A FEW IMPORTANT LESSONS

1. The majority of Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that the flood of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام engulfed the entire world. This is indicated by the prayer that he made. He prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Do not leave a single disbeliever on earth."* [*Surah Nūh (71), verse 26*].

Another verse indicative of the same is that of Surah Qamar , where Allāh says, *"And We caused springs to gush forth from the earth..."* Very few Scholars *(Ulama)* state that the flood was confined to the area in which Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام's nation lived. They interpret the word *"earth"* in the above two verses to mean a particular area of the earth, not the entire earth. Whatever the case, the fact of the matter is that a lesson should be derived from the episode.

Even if the flood were confined to a particular region, it can still be referred to as a universal flood because it affected all the people living on the earth at that time. There were no other people living on earth at that time besides the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

2. The statement of Allāh regarding the son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, that *"He is not of your family"* indicates that a Muslim and a disbeliever *(kāfir)* can never really be related, even though they may be related biologically. The immigrants *(Muhajirīn)* from among the Sahāba رضى الله عنهم truly understood this concept. In numerous battles their blood relatives confronted them, but they never hesitated to fight them to the death.

At the beginning of the battle of Badr, when the Ansār advanced to fight the polytheists, they said, "We do not want to fight these people. We wish to fight our cousins, the children of Abdul Muttalib." Upon this challenge, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه advanced to fight Walīd bin Utba, Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه tackled Shaybā and Sayyidina Ubaydah bin Hārith رضى الله عنه fought Utba. While Walīd

and Shayba were killed, Utba mortally injured Sayyidina Ubaydah رضی الله عنه, who subsequently passed away on the return to Madinah. Sayyidina Ali and Hamzah رضی الله عنه then killed Utba. [*Al Bidaya wan Nihayah*]

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* possess the fervour to deal first with their relatives in battle, why should the Muslims not display the same courage? No disbeliever *(kāfir)* can be related to a Muslim on account of his disbelief *(kufr)*.

3. According to the book "Ma'jmā'ul Buldān", the Mount of Judi is situated east of the Tigris river surrounding the island of Ibn Umar. It now forms part of the city of Mawsil (in Iraq). The famous persons Bar Qa'badi and Imām Jazari رحمة الله عليه are from the island of Ibn Umar.

4. The verse *"O Earth! Swallow your water"* is so replete with finer points of Arabic eloquence that Imām Jazari رحمة الله عليه has compiled a book based purely on this subject. The title of the book is "Kifāyatul Al Ma'iy Fi Ayati Yā Ardub La'iy." In it he quotes the treatise of Imām Sakkaki رحمة الله عليه. [*Kash'fuz Zunūn*].

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۖ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا مُفْتَرُونَ ﴿50﴾ يَٰقَوْمِ لَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنِىٓ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿51﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ ٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ ٱلسَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُم مِّدْرَارًا وَيَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً إِلَىٰ قُوَّتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَوَلَّوْا۟ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿52﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰهُودُ مَا جِئْتَنَا بِبَيِّنَةٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِىٓ ءَالِهَتِنَا عَن قَوْلِكَ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿53﴾ إِن نَّقُولُ إِلَّا ٱعْتَرَىٰكَ بَعْضُ ءَالِهَتِنَا بِسُوٓءٍ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أُشْهِدُ ٱللَّهَ وَٱشْهَدُوٓا۟ أَنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿54﴾ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۖ فَكِيدُونِى جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنظِرُونِ ﴿55﴾ إِنِّى تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ رَبِّى وَرَبِّكُم ۚ مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ ءَاخِذٌۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى عَلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿56﴾ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُم مَّآ أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦٓ إِلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَيَسْتَخْلِفُ رَبِّى قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّونَهُۥ شَيْـًٔا ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَفِيظٌ ﴿57﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا هُودًا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ ﴿58﴾ وَتِلْكَ عَادٌ ۖ جَحَدُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَصَوْا۟ رُسُلَهُۥ وَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿59﴾ وَأُتْبِعُوا۟ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ عَادًا كَفَرُوا۟ رَبَّهُمْ ۗ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوْمِ هُودٍ ﴿60﴾

(50) And to the Ād We sent their brother Hūd. He said, "O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity besides Him. You people are only lying." (51) "O my people! I do not ask you any recompense for this. My recompense is the

responsibility of that Being Who created me. Do you not understand?" (52) "And O my people! Seek forgiveness from your Lord, then turn to Him. He will then send abundant rains to you and add strength to your strength. And do not turn away as criminals." (53) They replied, "O Hūd! You have not brought forth a proof and we will not leave our gods on your word, nor shall we believe in you." (54) All we have to say is that one of our gods has afflicted you with evil." He said, "I call Allāh to Witness and you people be witness that I am absolved of the partners that you ascribe... (55) .. besides Allāh. So all of you may plot against me and do not grant me any respite." (56) "Undoubtedly I rely only on Allāh, Who is my Lord and your Lord. He has control of the forelocks of every creature. In deed, my Lord is upon the straight path." (57) "So if you turn away, then I have certainly conveyed to you that with which I have been sent to you and my Lord will substitute you with a another nation. Then you will not be able to harm Him in the least. Without doubt, my Lord is cognisant of all things." (58) When Our order came, We saved Hūd and those with him by Our mercy. And We rescued him from a severe punishment. (59) This was the Ād.' They rejected the signs of their Lord, disobeyed His messengers, and followed the instruction of every obstinate tyrant. (60) Curse was made to pursue them in this world and in the Hereafter as well. Behold! The Ād disbelieved in their Lord. Behold! May the Ād, the people of Hūd be distanced!

SAYYIDINA HŪD عليه السلام PREACHED TO THE ĀD BUT THEY ARE FINALLY DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THEIR DISOBEDIENCE

The Ād were extremely powerful and mighty people. Allāh says in Surah Fajr, *"Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Ād, the people of Iram? Whose stature was like that of pillars? Those the like of which were never created in the lands."* [*Surah 89, verses 6-8*]

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"As for the Ād, they were arrogant on earth without reason, and said, 'Who can be more powerful than us?' Do they not see that Allāh, Who has created them, is more powerful than them?"* [*Surah 41, verse 15*]

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام was from the same nation of Ād and was sent as the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام to them. He enjoined them to believe in Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and to forsake their idols. He told them, *"O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity besides Him. You people are only lying* (when you refer to these gods as being true deities)."

In verse 69 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), he told them, *"Recall the time when He made you successors after the nation of Nūh and increased you considerably in stature. Call to mind the bounties of Allāh so that you may be successful."*

Allāh continues to say in the above verses, *"They replied, 'O Hūd! You have not brought forth a proof* (to attest to your Prophethood) *and we will not leave our gods on your word, nor shall we believe in you."* They continued to say, *"All we have to say is that one of our gods has afflicted you with evil."* i.e. They have afflicted you with a malady which has made you insane.

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام replied, *"I call Allāh to Witness and you people be witness that I am absolved of the partners that you ascribe besides Allāh."* He told them that since their enmity was now apparent, *"So all of you may plot against me and do*

not grant me any respite. Undoubtedly I rely only on Allāh, Who is my Lord and your Lord." Although he was alone against all of them, he was convinced that Allāh was more than adequate for him against them.

Stressing this point, he added, *"He has control of the forelocks of every creature."* Allāh controls the affairs of all His creation. Therefore, He would avert the plots of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* against His messenger, He added, *'indeed,* (in pleasing) *my Lord* (a person will be) *upon the straight path"*

Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام advised his people saying, *"And O my people! Seek forgiveness from your Lord* [adopt Belief *(Imān)*], *then turn to Him. He will then (forgive you and) send abundant rains to you and add strength to your strength. And do not turn away as criminals.*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the Ād had not had any rain for three years and their women had become barren. As a result, their strength began to deplete. Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام therefore gave them the above advice so that they may regain their lost might.

He then warned them, *"So if you turn away, then I have certainly conveyed to you that with which I have been sent to you and my Lord will substitute you with another nation. Then you will not be able to harm Him in the least. Without doubt, my Lord is cognisant of all things. "*...No disbeliever *(kāfir)* shall be able to escape Allāh's punishment.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf that the people said to Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام, *"Have you come to us so that we worship only Allāh and leave what our forefathers used to worship? Bring what you have promised us if you are of the truthful!"* [*Surah 7, verse 70*]

He replied to them by saying, *"The punishment and wrath of Allāh has already afflicted you."* [*Surah A'rāf ('7), verse '11*]

Allāh says, *"When Our order came, We saved Hūd and those with him by Our mercy. And We rescued him from a severe punishment."*

Describing the punishment, Allāh says in Surah Hāqqa, *"As for the Ād, they were destroyed by an icy tempest. Allāh ordered it upon them for seven nights and eight days. You would have seen them felled as if they were hollow palm trunks. Do you see any of them existing?"* [*Surah 69, verses 6-8*]

Allāh says in Surah Ahqāf, *"When they observed it as a cloud approaching their valleys they exclaimed, 'This is cloud that will bring us rain.' Rather, it was the thing they sought to hasten; a fierce wind bearing a painful punishment. It demolished everything by the command of its Lord and it transpired that only their homes could be seen. Thus do We punish the sinful nation."* [*Surah 46, verses 24, 25*]

Verses 41 and 42 of Surah Dhāriyāt (*Surah 51*) also contain a similar account of the punishment where Allāh says, *"And (there is also a lesson) in (the story) of the Ād when we sent a wind to them that was devoid of any good. It reduced everything it passed to smithereens."* Allāh then concludes the episode by saying, *"This was the Ād! They rejected the signs of their Lord, disobeyed His messengers, and followed the instruction of every obstinate tyrant."*

Describing their plight Allāh says, *"Curse was made to pursue them in this*

world and in the Hereafter as well (they were accursed in both the worlds). Behold! The Ād disbelieved in their Lord. Behold! May the Ād, the people of Hūd be distanced!"

۞ وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ هُوَ أَنشَأَكُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ فِيهَا فَٱسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى قَرِيبٌ مُّجِيبٌ ﴿61﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰصَٰلِحُ قَدْ كُنتَ فِينَا مَرْجُوًّا قَبْلَ هَٰذَآ ۖ أَتَنْهَىٰنَآ أَن نَّعْبُدَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَإِنَّنَا لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَآ إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ ﴿62﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّى وَءَاتَىٰنِى مِنْهُ رَحْمَةً فَمَن يَنصُرُنِى مِنَ ٱللَّهِ إِنْ عَصَيْتُهُۥ ۖ فَمَا تَزِيدُونَنِى غَيْرَ تَخْسِيرٍ ﴿63﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ ءَايَةً فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِىٓ أَرْضِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ قَرِيبٌ ﴿64﴾ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَقَالَ تَمَتَّعُوا۟ فِى دَارِكُمْ ثَلَٰثَةَ أَيَّامٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ وَعْدٌ غَيْرُ مَكْذُوبٍ ﴿65﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا صَٰلِحًا وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَمِنْ خِزْىِ يَوْمِئِذٍ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ ٱلْقَوِىُّ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ﴿66﴾ وَأَخَذَ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى دِيَٰرِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ﴿67﴾ كَأَن لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا۟ فِيهَآ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ثَمُودَا۟ كَفَرُوا۟ رَبَّهُمْ ۗ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّثَمُودَ ﴿68﴾

(61) To the Thamūd We sent their brother Sālih. He said, "O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. He created you from the earth and settled you therein. So seek forgiveness from Him, then turn to Him. Undoubtedly, my Lord is Near, Responsive. (62) They said, "O Sālih! Certainly we entertained high hopes in you from before. Do you forbid us from worshipping what our forefathers worshipped? Surely we are in such doubt with regard to what you call us to, that it has cast us into uncertainty." (63) He said, "O my people! Tell me. If I am upon a clear proof from my Lord and He has granted me a mercy from Himself, who will assist me against Allāh if I disobey Him? You only increase me in loss." (64) "And O my people! This is Allāh's camel as a sign for you. So leave it to graze in Allāh's land and do not touch it with evil intent, for then a nigh punishment shall afflict you." (65) So they killed it, whereupon he said, "Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. This is a promise that will not be falsified." (66) When Our order came, We saved Sālih and those with him by Our mercy and (saved them) from the humiliation of that day. Indeed your Lord is Powerful, the Mighty. (67) A scream seized the oppressors and they were left lying face down in their homes... (68) "... as if they never existed there. Behold! The Thamud disbelieved in their Lord. Behold! May the Thamud be distanced.

SAYYIDINA SĀLIH عليه السلام PREACHED TO THE THAMŪD BUT THEY ARE FINALLY DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THEIR DISOBEDIENCE

A detailed account of Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام and the Thamūd has been discussed in Surah A'rāf (*verse 73 to 79*). One may refer to it for the details. Here Allāh mentions, *"To the Thamūd We sent their brother Sālih. He said, 'O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him.*

In Surah A'rāf, he reminded them of Allāh's favours on them when he said, *"Recall when Allāh made you successors after the Ād and granted you a station on earth. You build palaces on the soft portion thereof and carve homes from the mountains. Call to mind Allāh's bounties and do not spread anarchy in the lands."* [*Surah 7, verse 73*]

In the above verses Allāh mentions, *"He created you from the earth and settled you therein. So seek forgiveness from Him* [by accepting Belief *(Imān)*], *then turn to Him. Undoubtedly, my Lord is Near* (He can hear all prayers), *Responsive* (He accepts prayers)."

Refusing to accept, *"They said, 'O Sālih! Certainly we entertained high hopes in you from before."* They told him that they were prepared to make him their leader and to refer to him in all matters. They added, *"Do you forbid us from worshipping what our forefathers worshipped? Surely we are in such doubt with regard to what you call us to, that it has cast us into uncertainty."*

"He said, 'O my people! Tell me. If I am upon a clear proof from my Lord and He has granted me a mercy from Himself (i.e. The Prophethood), who will assist me against Allāh if I disobey Him? You only increase me in loss (if I were to follow you)."

Allāh mentions in Surah A'rāf that they said, *"O Sālih! Bring upon us that which you threaten us with if you are really from the messengers."* [*Surah 7, verse 77*]

They also demanded that he cause a pregnant camel to emerge from a mountain as a miracle. They claimed that they would then accept his message. This he did by Allāh's command and he told them, *"And O my people! This is Allāh's camel as a sign for you. So leave it to graze in Allāh's land and do not touch it with evil intent, for then a nigh punishment shall afflict you."*

According to verse 155 of Surah Shu'arā (*Surah 26*), Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام told the people, *"This is the camel. It will have a day to drink and your animals will have an appointed day to drink."*

However, they consulted among themselves and someone prepared to kill the camel by hamstringing it. Allāh says, *"So they killed it, whereupon he said, 'Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days. This is a promise that will not be falsified."*

Allāh continues, *"When Our order came, We saved Sālih* عليه السلام *and those with him by Our mercy and (saved them) from the humiliation of that day. Indeed your Lord is Powerful, the Mighty."* Any nation that is punished is also made to suffer humiliation.

Describing the punishment Allāh says, *"A scream seized the oppressors and they were left lying face down in their homes as if they never existed there.* "They were

totally annihilated.

"Behold! The Thamud disbelieved in their Lord. Behold! May the Thamūd be distanced." In both worlds they were far flung from Allāh's mercy.

Note: Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verse 78*] mentioned that an earthquake struck them, while this Surah mentions a scream. There is no disparity between the two verses because it is very possible that both these took place. Some commentators say that a scream sounded from the sky and an earthquake ruptured from beneath them. Both these destroyed them. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v.2 p.391*) records that it was Jibr'īl عليه السلام who sounded the scream from above.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ بِٱلْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوا۟ سَلَٰمًا ۖ قَالَ سَلَٰمٌ ۖ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَن جَآءَ بِعِجْلٍ
حَنِيذٍ (69) فَلَمَّا رَءَآ أَيْدِيَهُمْ لَا تَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ نَكِرَهُمْ وَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً ۚ قَالُوا۟ لَا
تَخَفْ إِنَّآ أُرْسِلْنَآ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِ لُوطٍ (70) وَٱمْرَأَتُهُۥ قَآئِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَٰهَا بِإِسْحَٰقَ
وَمِن وَرَآءِ إِسْحَٰقَ يَعْقُوبَ (71) قَالَتْ يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰٓ ءَأَلِدُ وَأَنَا۠ عَجُوزٌ وَهَٰذَا بَعْلِى شَيْخًا ۖ إِنَّ
هَٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ عَجِيبٌ (72) قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَعْجَبِينَ مِنْ أَمْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ رَحْمَتُ ٱللَّهِ وَبَرَكَٰتُهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ
ٱلْبَيْتِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ (73) فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنْ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ٱلرَّوْعُ وَجَآءَتْهُ ٱلْبُشْرَىٰ يُجَٰدِلُنَا فِى
قَوْمِ لُوطٍ (74) إِنَّ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّٰهٌ مُّنِيبٌ (75) يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَٰذَآ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ قَدْ جَآءَ
أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَإِنَّهُمْ ءَاتِيهِمْ عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ مَرْدُودٍ (76)

(69) Indeed Our messenger angels came to Ibrahīm with glad tidings and greeted him with "Salām" (peace). He replied to their Salām and did not hesitate to present a roasted calf. (70) When he noticed that their hands were not reaching towards it, he grew fearful of them. They said, "Do not fear. We have been sent to the nation of Lūt." (71) His wife, standing by, laughed as We conveyed to her the glad tidings of Is'hāq, and Ya'qūb after Is'hāq. (72) She said, "Woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman and my husband here is an old man? This is indeed a strange event!" (73) They said, "Are you surprised at the command of Allāh? May Allāh's mercy and blessings be on you, O members of the household. Verily He is Worthy of all praise, The Exalted." (74) When the fear left Ibrahīm and the good news reached him, he debated with Us regarding the nation of Lūt. (75) Surely Ibrahīm was forbearing, compassionate and penitent. (76) "O Ibrahīm refrain from it. Without doubt the command of your Lord has come to pass. There shall surely come to them a punishment that cannot be averted."

ANGELS VISIT SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام TO CONVEY TO HIM THE GLAD TIDINGS OF A SON AND GRANDSON

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام preached to a nation of idolaters under the

leadership of the tyrant Nimrūd. They opposed him vehemently until even his own father warned him, *"Are you averse to my gods, O Ibrahīm? If you do not desist, I shall stone you. Leave me forever."* His people even threw him in a fire, but Allāh rescued him. Eventually, he was compelled to leave his land and he migrated to Shām, and lived in Palestine.

His nephew, Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, also left with him and Allāh made both of them Prophets عليهم السلام. The nation of Lūt عليه السلام (who lived where now the Dead Sea is) perpetrated gross sins and were depraved to the extent that Allāh finally decided to punish them. Before the angels informed Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام about the pending punishment, Allāh first sent them in the form of humans to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Recounting this episode Allāh says, *"Indeed Our messenge angels came to Ibrahīm with glad tidings and greeted him with Salām. 'He replied to their Salām and did not hesitate to present a roasted Calf"* Surah dhariyāt [*Surah 51, verse 26*] mentions that he presented "a fat calf." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the first person to ever entertain guests was Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. [*Mishkāt p. 385*]

However, angels do not eat or drink. Therefore, they did not reach towards the food to partake therefrom. Referring to this Allāh says, *"When he noticed that their hands were not reaching towards it, he grew fearful of them."* He feared their intentions since they behaved very strangely by not eating. According to verse 52 of Surah Hijr (15), Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to them, *"We are afraid of you."*

They reassured him by saying that they intended to inform him of the birth of a son to him, by the name of Is'hāq who would beget a son by the name of Ya'qūb. Hearing this he exclaimed, *"Do you give me these glad tidings whereas old-age has afflicted me? What glad tidings can you deliver?' They said, 'We convey to you the glad tidings of a reality, so do not become of the despondent.' He said, 'Only the deviant are despondent of Allāh's mercy."* [*Surah Hijr (15), verses 54-56*]

In addition to this *"They said, 'Do not fear. We have been sent to (punish) the nation of Lūt.*

Allāh says, *"His wife, standing by, laughed as We conveyed to her the glad tidings of Is'hāq, and Ya'qūb after Is'hāq."* "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" mentions that according to some commentators she laughed because the guests were not partaking of the meal that they presented to them. According to others, she laughed out of amazement that the people of Lūt عليه السلام can continue to enjoy themselves when Allāh's punishment was so close to them.

When she heard that she was soon to expect a child *"She said, 'Woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman and my husband here is an old man? This is indeed a strange event!"*

The angels said, *"Are you surprised at the command of Allāh? May. Allāh s mercy and blessings be on you, O members of the household. Verily He is Worthy of all praise, The Exalted."*

According to the tidings, it later transpired that this wife (Sārah) gave birth to Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. Sayyidah Sarah رضى الله عنها was the daughter of the

paternal uncle of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. His other wife was Sayyidah Hājrah رضى الله عنها, to whom Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was born. The incident of Sayyidah Hājrah رضى الله عنها and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was discussed in the commentary of verse 158 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh mentions, *"Indeed Safa and Marwa are from the signs of Allāh..."*

"When the fear left Ibrahīm and the good news reached him, he debated with Us regarding the nation of Lūt." This verse refers to the supplication that he made to Allāh not to destroy the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام because Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was still among them. The term *"debated with Us"* has been used because, according to some commentators, he pleaded to the angels not to punish them.

Allāh mentions in Surah Ankabūt that when the angels informed Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that they were to punish the nation of Lūt عليه السلام, he told them, *"Lūt is amongst them.' They replied, 'We know best who is present therein. We shall definitely rescue him and his family, except for his wife. She will be amongst those left behind."* [*Surah 29, verse 32*]

Referring to the concern of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in this matter, Allāh says, *"Surely Ibrahīm was forbearing, compassionate and penitent."*

However, the decision was already taken and his pleas could not be answered. The angels told him, *"Without doubt the command of your Lord has come to pass. There shall surely come to them a punishment that cannot be averted."*

وَلَمَّا جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَا لُوطٗا سِيٓءَ بِهِمۡ وَضَاقَ بِهِمۡ ذَرۡعٗا وَقَالَ هَٰذَا يَوۡمٌ عَصِيبٞ ﴿٧٧﴾
وَجَآءَهُۥ قَوۡمُهُۥ يُهۡرَعُونَ إِلَيۡهِ وَمِن قَبۡلُ كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِي
هُنَّ أَطۡهَرُ لَكُمۡۖ فَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخۡزُونِ فِي ضَيۡفِيٓۖ أَلَيۡسَ مِنكُمۡ رَجُلٞ رَّشِيدٞ ﴿٧٨﴾ قَالُواْ
لَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتَ مَا لَنَا فِي بَنَاتِكَ مِنۡ حَقّٖ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَعۡلَمُ مَا نُرِيدُ ﴿٧٩﴾ قَالَ لَوۡ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمۡ قُوَّةً أَوۡ
ءَاوِيٓ إِلَىٰ رُكۡنٖ شَدِيدٖ ﴿٨٠﴾ قَالُواْ يَٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَن يَصِلُوٓاْ إِلَيۡكَۖ فَأَسۡرِ
بِأَهۡلِكَ بِقِطۡعٖ مِّنَ ٱلَّيۡلِ وَلَا يَلۡتَفِتۡ مِنكُمۡ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا ٱمۡرَأَتَكَۖ إِنَّهُۥ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ
أَصَابَهُمۡۚ إِنَّ مَوۡعِدَهُمُ ٱلصُّبۡحُۚ أَلَيۡسَ ٱلصُّبۡحُ بِقَرِيبٖ ﴿٨١﴾ فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمۡرُنَا جَعَلۡنَا
عَٰلِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمۡطَرۡنَا عَلَيۡهَا حِجَارَةٗ مِّن سِجِّيلٖ مَّنضُودٖ ﴿٨٢﴾ مُّسَوَّمَةً عِندَ
رَبِّكَۖ وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٖ ﴿٨٣﴾

(77) When Our messenger angels came to Lūt, he became distressed because of their presence and his heart tightened. He said, "This is a day of misfortune." (78) His people came running to him. Before this they were engaged in evil works. He said, "O my people! These daughters of mine are purer for you, so do fear Allāh and do not disgrace me before my guests. Is there not a righteous man

among you?" (79) They replied, "You know very well that we have no interest in your daughters. You are well aware of our intentions. (80) He said, "If only I had some might against you or I could take refuge unto a strong pillar." (81) The angels said, "O Lūt! We are the messengers of your Lord. They will never be able to reach you. So leave with your family during a portion of the night, and none should turn to look back. Excepting your wife (i.e. do not take her with you). She will be afflicted with the same punishment that shall afflict them. The morning has been fixed for the punishment. Is the morning not soon enough?" (82) When Our order came, We made the upper portion of the land the lower portion and We rained down on the land continuously falling stones of pottery clay ... (83) ... that were marked by your Lord. These cities are not far from the oppressors.

THE ANGELS COME TO SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام AND HIS IMMORAL NATION IS DESTROYED

After leaving Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, the angels came to Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. His nation was accustomed to engaging in the lewd act of homosexuality. He tried his level best to prevent them, but they were stubborn and refused to desist. Instead of hearkening, they said, *"Remove them from your town. They are people who wish to be pure."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 82*]

When the angels came to him in the form of young and handsome men *"he became distressed because of their presence and his heart tightened. He said, 'This is a day of misfortune. "'* He felt this because he anticipated that the people would be quickly attracted to these angels and will want to perpetrate their vile and immoral acts with them.

According to his expectations, *"His people came running to him. Before this they were engaged in evil works. He said, 'O my people! These daughters of mine (i.e. the women of my nation) are purer for you (for you to take them into marriage to satisfy your desires), so do fear Allāh and do not disgrace me before my guests. Is there not a righteous man among you?"*

"They replied, 'You know very well that we have no interest in your daughters. You are well aware of our intentions."' When Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام realised that were not going to listen, he said, *"If only I had some might against you or I could take refuge unto a strong pillar."* He referred to belonging to a strong tribe or family from whom he could seek assistance. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that after Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, Allāh always caused the Prophets عليهم السلام to be members of a strong clan. *[Durrul Manthūr v. 3 p.343]*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"May Allāh have mercy on Lūt عليه السلام. He sought refuge onto a strong pillar."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p.478*]

When the angels saw the distress of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, they reassured him by saying, *"O Lūt! We are the messengers of your Lord. They will never be able to reach you."* Instead they will be destroyed. Therefore, since only your family are believers, *"leave with your family during a portion of the night, and none should turn to look back."*

However, they made one exception when they said, *"Excepting your wife (i.e. do not take her with you). She will be afflicted with the same punishment that shall afflict them. The morning has been fixed for the punishment."* Durrul Manthūr has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was so distraught with his people that he expressed the desire to leave immediately. Thereupon the angels asked, *"Is the morning not soon enough?"*

"When Our order came, We made the upper portion of the land the lower portion..." The angels turned the entire city upside down, crushing everyone between. In addition to this, *"We rained down on the land continuously falling stones of (hardened) pottery clay that were marked by your Lord."* Commentators mention that each stone bore the name of the person whom it was to strike.

Certain commentators have stated that the people present in the cities were killed when the cities were overturned, while the stones struck those in the nearby vicinity.

Someone once asked Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه whether everyone from the nation of Lūt عليه السلام was killed. He replied in the affirmative with the exception of one person who was on a trade journey in Makkah at the time. He was saved for 40 days because of his presence in the Haram. However, as soon as he emerged from there, a falling stone also killed him.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the stones struck all those people who were on journey and outside the city. He mentions that, according to some, the stones were rained down upon the cities after they were overturned. This opinion corresponds to the sequence mentioned in the Qur'ān and does not contradict the version that says the stones struck those in the nearby vicinity.

The Arabic word "Sijjīl" *("stones of pottery clay")* is derived from a Persian word according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has translated it to mean pumice stones that were hardened by baking.

Commentators have mentioned that the cities destroyed were named Mī'ah, Sa'ra, Āsra, Dawma and Sadūm, the last being the largest. The area where all these cities were annihilated is marked today by the Dead Sea, the waters of which do not pass out of the boundaries of these cities. The water of the Dead Sea is tainted and is of no use to man and animal.

Allāh says in Surah Hijr , *'A scream seized them at sunrise."* It is learnt from this that the nation of Lūt عليه السلام were afflicted by three types of punishment. (1) A scream, (2) the overturning of their cities and (3) the shower of stones.

The wife of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام was a disbeliever and, according to certain commentators, she remained behind with the rest of the people in the city. There she was also killed. Other commentators have mentioned that she left with the believers, but turned back to look when she heard the punishment. She then exclaimed grief at the destruction of her nation, whereupon a stone struck her as well. The details of this episode can be referred to in verses 80-84 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

Allāh concludes by saying, *"These cities are not far from the oppressors."* They

may all derive lessons from this incident. Allāh says in Surah Hijr [*Surah* 15, *verse* 76], 76. *"These towns are along an accessible thoroughfare."* The people of Makkah passed that way on their road to Syria.

Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, 137. *"You pass by them in the mornings and at nights. Do you not understand?"* [*Surah 37, verse 137, 138*]

۞ وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ وَلَا
تَنقُصُوا۟ ٱلْمِكْيَالَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ ۚ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰكُم بِخَيْرٍ وَإِنِّىٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ
يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ (84) وَيَٰقَوْمِ أَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْمِكْيَالَ وَٱلْمِيزَانَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا۟
ٱلنَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (85) بَقِيَّتُ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن
كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۚ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ عَلَيْكُم بِحَفِيظٍ (86) قَالُوا۟ يَٰشُعَيْبُ أَصَلَوٰتُكَ
تَأْمُرُكَ أَن نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَآ أَوْ أَن نَّفْعَلَ فِىٓ أَمْوَٰلِنَا مَا نَشَٰٓؤُا۟ ۖ إِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ
ٱلْحَلِيمُ ٱلرَّشِيدُ (87)

(84) To Madyan We sent their brother Shu'ayb. He said, "O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do not reduce in weight and measure. Indeed I see you in fortunate circumstances but I fear for you the punishment of a day that will engulf all." (85) "O my people! Weigh and measure in full with justice; do not decrease for people their things and do not spread havoc on earth." (86) "The leftovers given by Allāh, is better for you if you are believers. I am not a guardian unto you. (87) They said, "O Shu'ayb! Does your Salāh instruct you that we leave what our forefathers worshipped or that we do with our wealth as we please. Surely you are forbearing and sensible."

SAYYIDINA SHU'AYB عليه السلام IS SENT TO THE PEOPLE OF MADYAN AND THEY RAISE ABSURD OBJECTIONS

Surah Shu'arā mentions that Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام was sent to the people of Aykah, while Surah A'rāf, Surah Hūd and Surah Ankabūt state that he was sent to the people of Madyan. They were Polytheists and used to cheat people in weight and measure when transacting.

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام preached to them saying, *"O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do not reduce in weight and measure. Indeed I see you in fortunate circumstances but I fear for you the punishment of a day that will engulf all."*

He pleaded with them saying, *"O my people! Weigh and measure in full with justice; do not decrease for people their things and do not spread havoc on earth. The leftovers given by Allāh is better for you if you are believers."* Whatever is earned lawfully contains much more blessings even though it be little. Wealth acquired

by unlawful *(Harām)* means will be bereft of blessings even though it be in large quantities.

Insolently *"They said, 'O Shu'ayb! Does your Salāh instruct you that we leave what our forefathers worshipped or that we do with our wealth as we please."* In making these statements they intended to mock at the fact that Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام was very particular about his Salāh. They also added mockingly, *"Surely you are forbearing and sensible."*

Even in today's times, when people are reminded to be wary of how they earn, they also argue that they can do with their wealth as they please. They criticize the Scholars *(Ulama)* and the religious preachers for "interfering" in their affairs. They fail to realise that all their wealth is from Allāh and, as the Master of all, He reserves the right to dictate exactly how and where this wealth must be earned and spent. The preachers are only conveying Allāh's message to them.

قَالَ يَـٰقَوْمِ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَرَزَقَنِي مِنْهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَآ أَنْهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ ۚ إِنْ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا ٱلْإِصْلَـٰحَ مَا ٱسْتَطَعْتُ ۚ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِيٓ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿88﴾ وَيَـٰقَوْمِ لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِيٓ أَن يُصِيبَكُم مِّثْلُ مَآ أَصَابَ قَوْمَ نُوحٍ أَوْ قَوْمَ هُودٍ أَوْ قَوْمَ صَـٰلِحٍ ۚ وَمَا قَوْمُ لُوطٍ مِّنكُم بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿89﴾ وَٱسْتَغْفِرُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَيْهِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي رَحِيمٌ وَدُودٌ ﴿90﴾

(88) Shu'ayb عليه السلام said, "O my people! Tell me. If I am upon a clear proof from my Lord and He provides for me a bountiful provision, (then how can I stop preaching to you?). I do not wish to oppose you in a manner that I perpetrate the same things that I forbid you from. I only wish reformation as far as I am able. My ability is only from Allāh. Only on Him do I rely and to Him do I turn." 89. "O my people! Let not your opposition for me cause the same punishment to afflict you as afflicted the nation of Nūh عليه السلام or the nation of Hūd عليه السلام or the nation of Sālih عليه السلام. And the nation of Lūt عليه السلام were not far off from you." (90) Seek forgiveness from your Lord then turn to Him. Indeed my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving.

SAYYIDINA SHU'AYB عليه السلام TELLS HIS NATION THAT HE SEEKS TO REFORM THEM AND THAT THEIR ANIMOSITY FOR HIM SHOULD NOT LEAD TO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION

When the people refused to hearken to his message *"Shu'ayb عليه السلام said, 'O my people! Tell me. If I am upon a clear proof (the truth) from my Lord and He provides for me a bountiful provision* (in the form of apostleship), *(then how can I stop preaching to you?)."*

He further impressed upon their minds that they would only be justified in their opposition to him if his personal practice contradicted his preaching. He told them, *'I do not wish to oppose you in a manner that I perpetrate the same things*

that I forbid you from." He only preached to them what he himself understood to be right and beneficial.

He told them that he was a well wisher to them because, he said, *"I only wish reformation as far as I am able. My ability* (to perform all good deeds) *is only from Allāh. Only on Him do I rely and to Him do I turn."*

He then warned them, *"O my people! Let not your opposition for me cause the same punishment to afflict you as afflicted the nation of Nūh* عليه السلام *or the nation of Hūd* عليه السلام *or the nation of Sālih* عليه السلام*. And the nation of Lūt were not far off from you (in time and in geographical location)."*

He then advised them saying, *"Seek forgiveness from your Lord (i.e. become believers) then turn to Him. Indeed my Lord is Most Merciful, Most Loving."* Allāh will be merciful and loving to the person who turns to him.

Note: *"He provides for me a bountiful provision..."* One of the interpretations is that this refers to the Prophethood. Other commentators have mentioned that this refers to Lawful *(Halāl)* wealth that Allāh had given him without him having to resort to the illegal methods that the people employed.

قَالُوا يَٰشُعَيْبُ مَا نَفْقَهُ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا تَقُولُ وَإِنَّا لَنَرَىٰكَ فِينَا ضَعِيفًا ۖ وَلَوْلَا رَهْطُكَ
لَرَجَمْنَٰكَ ۖ وَمَا أَنتَ عَلَيْنَا بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٩١﴾ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَرَهْطِيٓ أَعَزُّ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ
وَٱتَّخَذْتُمُوهُ وَرَآءَكُمْ ظِهْرِيًّا ۖ إِنَّ رَبِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَيَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْمَلُوا
عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّي عَٰمِلٌ ۖ سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ
كَٰذِبٌ ۖ وَٱرْتَقِبُوٓا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ رَقِيبٌ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا شُعَيْبًا وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا مَعَهُۥ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَأَخَذَتِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ٱلصَّيْحَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دِيَٰرِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ
﴿٩٤﴾ كَأَن لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيهَآ ۗ أَلَا بُعْدًا لِّمَدْيَنَ كَمَا بَعِدَتْ ثَمُودُ ﴿٩٥﴾

(91) They said, "O Shu'aib! We do not understand much of what you say, and we consider you to be a weakling among us. If it were not for your tribe we would have stoned you. You are not deserving of honour in our opinion." (92) He said, "O my people! Is my tribe more honourable to you than Allāh and you have cast Him behind your backs? Verily my Lord encompasses all that you do." (93) "And O my people! Perform your deeds where you are. I am performing too. Soon you shall come to know to whom will such a punishment come that will disgrace him, and who is a liar. Keep waiting. Indeed I am waiting with you." (94) When Our command came, We rescued Shu'ayb and those who believed with him by Our mercy. A scream seized the oppressors and they lay face down in their homes... (95) ... as if they never existed there. Behold! May Madyan be distanced just as the Thamūd were distanced.

THE PEOPLE OF MADYAN REPLY IN A MOST INSOLENT MANNER AND ARE FINALLY DESTROYED

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام tirelessly strove to reform the people but they were obstinate. One of the insolent statements that they made was that *"They said, 'O Shu'ayb! We do not understand much of what you say. . ."*In saying this they meant to say that his talks were not worthy of comprehension. It is also possible that they really did not understand some of his talks because they did not pay attention to what he said.

They also told him, *"we consider you to be a weakling among us. If it were not for your tribe* (who are adherents to our faith) *we would have stoned you. You are not deserving of honour in our opinion."*

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام told them, *"O my people! Is my tribe more honourable to you than Allāh and you have cast Him behind your backs?"* He indicated that they did not respect the fact that he was the Holy Prophet from Allāh but rather respected the fact that he belonged to a certain tribe. It was only this respect that caused them to desist from attacking him, rather than the fear of Allāh.

"Verily my Lord encompasses all that you do." Allāh. will soon punish you for your deeds and *"Soon you shall come to know to whom will such a punishment come that will disgrace him, and who is a liar."*

He told them, *'And O my people! Perform your deeds where you are. I am performing too."* In this manner *"Keep waiting: Indeed I am waiting with you."* Soon when the punishment will come and it is seen whom it will afflict, it will be clear who were the ones in error.

Consequently, *"When Our command came, We rescued Shu'ayb and those who believed with him by Our mercy. A scream seized the oppressors and they lay face down in their homes as if they never existed there. Behold! May Madyan be distanced (from Allāh's mercy) just as the Thamūd were distanced."*

A detailed account of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام was discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses* 85-93], where certain extra facts have been mentioned. It should also be noted that in Surah A'rāf mention is made of an earthquake, while here a scream is mentioned. Both could very well have taken place.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِـَٔايَـٰتِنَا وَسُلْطَـٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٦﴾ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَٱتَّبَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۖ وَمَآ أَمْرُ فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيدٍ ﴿٩٧﴾ يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ ٱلنَّارَ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْوِرْدُ ٱلْمَوْرُودُ ﴿٩٨﴾ وَأُتْبِعُوا۟ فِى هَـٰذِهِۦ لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۚ بِئْسَ ٱلرِّفْدُ ٱلْمَرْفُودُ ﴿٩٩﴾

(96) Verily We sent Mūsa with Our signs and a clear proof... (97).... To pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his governors. However, they followed the orders of pharaoh (Fir'aun), and the orders of pharaoh (Fir'aun) were improper. (98) He will lead

his people on the Day of Judgement and enter them into the Fire. It is an evil place indeed where they shall be entered. (99) Curse has been made to pursue them in this world and in the Hereafter as well. It will be an evil prize that they will receive.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام IS SENT. PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS PEOPLE ARE REBELLIOUS AND THEY ARE ACCURSED IN BOTH WORLDS

Allāh says, *"Verily We sent Mūsa with Our signs (miracles) and a clear proof (the staff or the shining hand) to* pharaoh *(Fir'aun) and his governors."* Mention of the miracles of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was made in Surah A'rāf . Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was sent to all the people of pharaoh *(Fir'aun),* the governors are mentioned here because they were the first priority. If their leaders accept, the masses are soon to follow. If they do not accept, the masses will also not accept because of two reasons. The first is that these leaders will not allow them to accept and will complicate matters for them if they do. The second is that people generally look up to their leaders for guidance and will not follow something that their leaders do not recommend.

Although it always occurs that the first followers of the Prophets عليهم السلام are the poorer people, their numbers are always small. The Prophets عليهم السلام have always tried to win over the leaders so that the masses can be easily influenced.

"However, they followed the orders of pharaoh (Fir'aun), and the orders of pharaoh *(Fir'aun) were improper."* Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was their leader in this world and even in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"He will lead his people on the Day of Judgement and enter them into the Fire. it is an evil place indeed where they shall be entered."*

Stating the fact that they will be cursed in both the worlds, Allāh says, *"Curse has been made to pursue them in this world and in the Hereafter as well, It will be an evil prize that they will receive."*

The destruction of pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his people is mentioned in Surah Baqarah [*Surah 2, verse* 50], Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 136, 137*] and Surah Yunus [*Surah 10, verse 90-92*]

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّهُۥ عَلَيْكَ ۖ مِنْهَا قَآئِمٌ وَحَصِيدٌ ﴿100﴾ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِن ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ فَمَآ أَغْنَتْ عَنْهُمْ ءَالِهَتُهُمُ ٱلَّتِى يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ لَّمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَمَا زَادُوهُمْ غَيْرَ تَتْبِيبٍ ﴿101﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَآ أَخَذَ ٱلْقُرَىٰ وَهِىَ ظَٰلِمَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُۥٓ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿102﴾

(100) This is from the narratives of the cities that We relate to you. Some of them are still standing, while others have been annihilated. (101) We did not oppress them, but they oppressed themselves. Their gods, which they called upon

besides Allāh were of no avail at all to them when the command of your Lord came. They only increased them in destruction. (102) Such is the grasp of your Lord when He seized a town that is oppressive. Indeed His grasp is painful and severe.

THE RETRIBUTION OF ALLĀH IS SEVERE AND PAINFUL WHEN HE SEIZES A CITY

From verse 25 of this Surah to this point, the narratives of seven Prophets عليهم السلام have been given. Allāh now says with regard to these, *"This is from the narratives of the cities that We relate to you. Some of them are still standing..."* These may be either in ruins, or other nations have built over them. Allāh says in another verse, *"We have settled you in the dwellings of those who oppressed themselves i.e. the destroyed nations.*

"....while others have been annihilated." These were the likes of the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. People had heard of these event before the coming of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and they also passed the sites of these destroyed places. The lessons were therefore extremely emphasised for them.

Allāh then says, *"We did not oppress them, but they oppressed themselves. Their gods, which they called upon besides Allāh were of no avail at all to them when the command of your Lord came. They only increased them in destruction."* They were all eventually destroyed.

Allāh concludes by saying, *"Such is the grasp of your Lord when He seized a town that is oppressive, indeed His grasp is painful and severe.* "None is able to escape Allāh's punishment.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّمَنْ خَافَ عَذَابَ الْآخِرَةِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَّجْمُوعٌ لَّهُ النَّاسُ وَذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَّشْهُودٌ ﴿103﴾ وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهُ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مَّعْدُودٍ ﴿104﴾ يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لَا تَكَلَّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَسَعِيدٌ ﴿105﴾ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ شَقُوا فَفِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ ﴿106﴾ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿107﴾ ۞ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ سُعِدُوا فَفِي الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ ۖ عَطَاءً غَيْرَ مَجْذُوذٍ ﴿108﴾ فَلَا تَكُ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّمَّا يَعْبُدُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ۚ مَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُهُم مِّن قَبْلُ ۚ وَإِنَّا لَمُوَفُّوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ غَيْرَ مَنقُوصٍ ﴿109﴾

(103) Surely in it are signs for him who fears the punishment of the Hereafter. This shall be such a day when people will be gathered, and that will be the day when all will be present. (104) We shall only postpone it for a little while. (105) When that day will dawn, a soul will speak only with His permission. Some of

them will be unfortunate, while others will be fortunate. (106) As for those who will be unfortunate, they will certainly be in the Fire, where they will scream and shout... (107) They will abide therein forever as long as the skies and the earth exist, except when your Lord wills. Undoubtedly your Lord can perfectly accomplish whatever He wills. (108) As for those who shall be fortunate, they will certainly be in Heaven (Jannah), where they will abide forever, as long as the skies and the earth exist, except when your Lord wills. This prize will never end. (109) So do not be in doubt with regard to what these people worship. They merely worship as their forefathers worshipped before. Verily We shall grant them their full share without deduction.

ALL WILL BE GATHERED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT (QIYĀMAH) AND NONE WILL SPEAK WITHOUT ALLĀH'S PERMISSION

Allāh begins by saying that in the narratives of the past nations. *"are signs for him who fears the punishment of the Hereafter."*

Describing the Day of Judgement, Allāh says, *"This shall be such, a day when people will be gathered, and that will be the day when all will be present."* None will be able to escape being present on that day.

"We shall only postpone it for a little while." The Day of Judgement will dawn when Allāh determines. However, it has not yet taken place and Allāh has postponed it to its appointed time. The fact that it has not yet dawned does not mean that it will not come.

"When that day will dawn, a soul will speak only with His permission." Allāh says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"He is only granting them respite until a day when gazes will be fixed upwards. They will be running with their heads fixed upwards, their gazes never returning to them. And their hearts will be air."* [*Surah 14, verses 42, 43*]

Initially none will speak. However, when the reckoning will begin, people will be permitted to talk. They will then either admit their sins or make excuses. The Prophets عليهم السلام, the Scholars *(Ulama)* and the martyrs will be permitted to intercede on behalf of others. Thereafter people will be divided into two groups viz. *"Some of them will be unfortunate, while others will be fortunate."*

"As for those who will be unfortunate, they will certainly be in the Fire, where they will scream and shout..." The Arabic words used in this verse for *"scream and shout"* actually denote the beginning and ending sounds of a *"donkey's bray."* Such will be the cries of the people of Hell. *"...They will abide therein forever as long as the skies and the earth exist, except when your Lord wills. Undoubtedly your Lord can perfectly accomplish whatever He wills."*

Allāh then says, *"As for those who shall be fortunate, they will certainly be in Heaven (Jannah), where they will abide forever, as long as the skies and the earth exist, except when your Lord wills. This prize will never end."*

In conclusion Allāh reassures the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So do not be in doubt with regard to what these people worship. They merely worship as their forefathers worshipped from before. Verily We shall grant them their full share (in this*

world for their good deeds) without deduction."

NOTEWORTHY POINTS

1. The above verses make it clear that there will be only two groups on the Day of Judgement viz, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"A group shall be in Heaven (Jannah), while another shall be in the Blaze."* [*Surah 42, verse 7*]

From the believers *(Mu'minīn)* there will be those who will have to suffer a while in Hell for their sins, but will eventually be removed from there. Others will be pardoned without having to suffer in Hell, either through the intercession of another, or by Allāh's sheer grace. These facts have been mentioned in the Ahadīth.

However, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will suffer forever in Hell. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"The abode of these people is Hell and they will not find an escape from there."* After the believers *(Mu'minīn)* enter Heaven *(Jannah)*, they will also not be removed from there. Allāh says in Surah Hijr with regard to the people of Heaven *(Jannah)*, *"No difficulty shall afflict them there, nor will they be removed from there."* [*Surah 15, verse 48*]

Says Allāh in Surah Kahf, *"They will abide therein forever and will never want to leave it."* in the Hereafter, death will be slaughtered in the form of a sheep between Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell. An announcement will then be made saying, "O people of Heaven *(Jannah)*! There will now be no death. O people of Hell! There will now be no more death." [*Bukhari v. 2 p.691 and Muslim v. 2 p.382*]

The Qur'ān has mentioned that the dwellers of Hell will also abide there forever. Verses to this effect are found in verse 121 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*), verse 65 of Surah Ahzāb (*Surah 33*) and verse 23 of Surah Jinn (*Surah 72*). It is unfortunate that some people seek to refute these verses of the Qur'ān by claiming that Hell will come to an end and that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will emerge at some time. May Allāh grant them the proper understanding. Āmīn.

2. *"As long as the skies and the earth exist"* Some commentators have explained that, in the Arabic language, this term refers to anything that is everlasting. Others state that the phrase refers to the skies and the earth of Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell, which are eternal, like Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell themselves.

This interpretation seems acceptable because verse 74 of Surah Zumar (*Surah 39*) does refer to Heaven *(Jannah)* as "earth," and anything that is above one's head is generally referred to as the 'sky.' The only difficulty in accepting this interpretation will be the fact that the plural is used for the word *"skies."* Therefore, the point will remain controversial until it is proven that Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell have a multitude of skies.

3. In both verses that contain the phrase *"as long as the skies and the earth exist,"* the condition *"except when your Lord wills"* appears. The commentators have entered into lengthy discussions with regard to this exception. In my humble opinion, the best interpretation is that which has been tendered by Farra رحمة الله عليه, as quoted in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 2 p.402*). He mentions that Allāh has made this exception, but He will not exercise it i.e. If Allāh so willed, He could

remove the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell from their respective abodes, but He will not do so, because He has decreed that they will all abide therein forever.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes some notable scholars as saying that the reason for the addition of this exception is that none should think that Allāh is obliged to punish the people of Hell and give enjoyment to the people of Heaven *(Jannah)*. Nothing is binding on Allāh, because He has power over everything. None can force Him to do anything.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ فَٱخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِىَ
بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ (110) وَإِنَّ كُلًّا لَّمَّا لَيُوَفِّيَنَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (111) فَٱسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ أُمِرْتَ وَمَن تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا۟ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ (112) وَلَا تَرْكَنُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ فَتَمَسَّكُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم
مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَآءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ (113) وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ طَرَفَىِ ٱلنَّهَارِ
وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ ٱلَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلْحَسَنَٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّٰكِرِينَ (114) وَٱصْبِرْ
فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (115)

(110) Indeed We had granted Mūsa the Book, after which differences arose about it. If it were not for a decree that proceeded from your Lord, the decision would have been passed between them. Surely they are in such doubt about it, that they have been cast into uncertainty. (111) Without doubt your Lord will certainly grant the full recompense for the actions of every person there may be. Indeed He is Informed of whatever they do. (112) So remain steadfast as you have been commanded and those who repent with you (should also remain steadfast), and do not transgress the limits. Surely He sees what you do. (113) And do not be inclined towards those who oppress, for then the Fire shall reach you, and you will not have any allies against Allāh and you will not be assisted. (114) And establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and during portions of the night. Verily good deeds obliterate evil deeds. This is an advice to those who will take heed. (115) Be patient, for undoubtedly Allāh does not put to waste the reward of those who do good.

THE TORAH IS GIVEN TO SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام. THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND HIS UMMAH *(FOLLOWERS)* ARE COMMANDED TO BE STEADFAST

Allāh begins by mentioning Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. He says, *"Indeed We had granted Mūsa the Book* (the Torah), *after which differences arose about* it." i.e. Some people accepted it as the truth, while others rejected it. This verse offers consolation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It tells him that he should not be too distressed that some people refuse to accept the Qur'ān because the same happened to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and the Torah.

"If it were not for a decree that proceeded from your Lord, the decision would have been passed between them." i.e. If Allāh had not already ordained when they will be punished, they would have certainly received their punishment immediately. Concerning these rejecters, Allāh says, *"Surely they are in such doubt about it that they have been cast into uncertainty."*

Thereafter Allāh continues to say, *"Without doubt your Lord will certainly grant the full recompense for the actions of every person there may be. Indeed He is Informed of whatever they do."* Allāh will grant every person the full reward for his deeds and may also punish him for his sins, because no deed is hidden from Allāh.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says, *"So remain steadfast as you have been commanded and those who repent with you (should also remain steadfast)..."* It is necessary for every believer *(Mu'min)* to adhere to the straight path. The straight path *(Siratul Mustaqīm)* is the way that Allāh showed the Prophets عليهم السلام to teach to the people, whereby they can attain Allāh's pleasure. They should remain fixed upon this path until their last breaths.

"....those who repent with you..." Refers to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, since they have repented from disbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* when they entered into the fold of Islām. This instruction to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah entails carrying out all the commands of Allāh and abstaining from all the things that He has forbidden.

In reality, this instruction to remain steadfast is extremely difficult, but Allāh assists the person who sincerely attempts to abide by it. Sayyidina Sufyān bin Abdillah Thaqafi رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once advised him in such a manner that he did not require to seek advice from any other. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Say, *"Lā ilāha Illallāh"* and then remain steadfast." [i.e. Declare your belief in Allāh as a Muslim and then remain steadfast upon the religion *(D'īn)*]. [*Muslim*]

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 3 p.351*) reports from Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه that when the above verse was revealed (i.e. *"So remain steadfast as you have been commanded..."*, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Prepare yourselves! Prepare yourselves!" He has also reported that after this the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم was not seen laughing.

Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه once asked, "O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! You have grown old? (The signs of old age are visible?)" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Surah Hūd, Surah Wāqi'ah, Surah Wal Mursalāt, Surah Amma Yata Sā'alūn and Surah Idhash Shamsu Kuwwirat have made me old" [*Mishkāt p. 458*]. This was so because these Surahs contain detailed accounts of the Day of Judgement.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the above verse (*"So remain steadfast as you have been commanded... "*) was the most difficult for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Certain pious people have reported seeing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in

a dream. When he was asked what was it in Surah Hūd that made him old, he replied that it was the instruction to remain steadfast. This verse and all those referring to judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* collectively contributed to ageing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was steadfast as no other person could be, yet he feared that he was not complying with Allāh's command perfectly.

PROHIBITION AGAINST TRANSGRESSING THE LIMITS

"..... and do not transgress the limits." This verse prohibits all bid'ah *(innovations)*, be they in belief or in practice. At the same time, it prohibits all forms of 'ghulū' [excesses in religion *(Dīn)*]. This same excesses *(ghulū)* has prompted the Christians to call Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام the son of Allāh, and it has goaded many Muslims to deny the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a human (although the Qur'ān attests to this fact).

"Surely He sees what you do." Allāh will reward those who are steadfast and will punish those who transgress the limits.

THE PROHIBITION AGAINST INCLINING TOWARDS THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* AND THE IRRELIGIOUS

"And do not be inclined towards those who oppress, for then the Fire shall reach you..." This verse prohibits all forms of inclining towards the ways of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and sinners. Therefore, the person who adopts any of the practices or beliefs of these people will be punished by Allāh in Hell (unless he repents).

Associating with disbelievers *(kuffār)*, sinners and irreligious people will make a person just like them. It is for this reason that it is prohibited to associate with them. Remaining in their company will cause one to join them in Hell as well. Copying their dress, modes and mannerisms also indicates inclining towards them.

Allāh says further with regard to the plight of those who are inclined towards these people, *"and you will not have any allies against Allāh and you will not be assisted."*

"And establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and during portions of the night." Commentators have mentioned that this verse contains all the five Salāh. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the Salāhs 'at the two ends of the day" refers to Fajr, Zuhr and Āsr, while Maghrib and Ishā are implied by those Salāhs performed *"during portions of the night."*

According to other commentators, Fajr and Zuhr are at one end of the day, while Āsr and Maghrib are implied by the other end. Isha is then referred to as the Salāh performed *"during the portions of the night."* Another opinion states that only Fajr and Āsr are referred to in the verse because they are especially difficult to perform. Fajr is difficult because of the effort required to wake up, and Āsr is difficult because people are generally engrossed in trade during this time. It may also be said that Isha is especially referred to as the Salāh performed *"during the portions of the night,"* because it falls during the time when people wish to sleep. It

is therefore also difficult.

The possibility also exists that the Tahajjud Salāh is referred to as the Salāh performed *"during the portions of the night,"* because it may be performed during any portion of the night until dawn. Some commentators have mentioned that the five Salāh are contained in verse 17 of Surah Rūm (*Surah 30*), where Allāh says, *"So glorify Allāh's purity during the evenings and mornings."*

Some commentators say that *"the ends of the day"* refer to Fajr and Āsr, while Maghrib and Isha are referred to as the Salāhs performed *"during the portions of the night."* They say that Zuhr is mentioned in the verse of Surah Isrā, where Allāh says, *"Establish Salāh when the sun passes the meridian..."* [*Surah 17, verse 78*]

"Verily good deeds obliterate evil deeds." "Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that a person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had a relation with a woman in the far end of Madinah, but they had not committed adultery. He told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to pass whatever judgement he deemed appropriate. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه told the person that it would have been better if he had concealed his sin as Allāh had thus far concealed it. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, however, remained silent.

Thereafter the person left. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then sent someone to call him. When he arrived, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse to him viz. *"And establish Salāh at the two ends of the day and during portions of the night. Verily good deeds obliterate evil deeds."* When someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether this verse referred specifically to that person, he replied that it was for everyone. [*Mishkāt p.* 58]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه has mentioned that any good deeds serves to nullify sins. Therefore, he mentioned, one should perform any good deed that one possibly can.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, *"Fear Allāh wherever you may be. Perform a good deed after a sin for it will obliterate it. Display good character before people."* [*Mishkāt p.* 432]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that a person asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "I have committed a major sin. How can I be forgiven?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he had a mother. When he replied in the negative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether he had a maternal aunt. When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to treat her well. [*Mishkāt p. 420*]

Together with the conditions of repentance *(Tauba)*, good deeds also aid in the forgiveness of all sins. Although all good deeds may serve to secure forgiveness, certain specific deeds have been mentioned in the Ahadīth with reference to the expiation of sins. Some of these are cited below.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Tell me if any of you have a river running in front of his home and he baths therein five times daily, will there be any dirt left on his body?" The Sahāba رضى الله عنهم submitted that there cannot be any dirt left. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told them, "Such is the example of the five daily Salāh. Allāh annuls all

sins by their performance." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.76*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has also narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever stands in devotion on the night of Qadr, in the state of Imān and with conviction, all his previous sins will be forgiven. Whoever observes the fasts of Ramadhān in the state of Imān and with conviction, all his previous sins will be forgiven." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.255*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned the person who stands in devotion during the nights of Ramadhān in the state of Imān and with conviction, all his previous sins will be forgiven. [*Bukhari v. 1 p.269*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever performs hajj for Allāh without perpetrating any act of lewdness and without committing any sin, will return like the day his mother gave birth to him (i.e. sinless)." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.206*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه also reported that the messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said that all the sins performed between two Umrahs are forgiven and that only Heaven *(Jannah)* can be the reward for an accepted Hajj. [*Bukhari v. 1 p.238*]

He has also reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the five Salāh, one Jumu'ah until the next Jumu'ah and one Ramadhān until the next Ramadhān expiates all the sins committed in between, on condition that major sins are abstained from. [*Muslim v. 1 p.122*]

Sayyidina Uthman bin Affān رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who performs ablution *(wudhu)*, ensuring that the water reaches all the parts and then performs the obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh in congregation, Allāh will forgive all his previous sins. [*Ibid*]

Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه has also narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when the time of Salāh dawns on any person and he performs ablution *(wudhu)* properly, performs the bowing *(Ruku)* and prostration *(Sajdah)* of Salāh properly, this will be expiation for his sins; on condition that he abstains from major sins. He added that this reward will apply for every Salāh. [*Muslim v. 1 p.121*]

He has also reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a person performs ablution *(wudhu)* properly, his sins fall away from all his limbs, to the extent that even the sins that may be beneath his fingertips will fall away. [*Muslim v. 1 p.125*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person performs ablution *(wudhu)* well and then proceeds to the Masjid only for the purpose of Salāh, he will be raised a rank for every step that he takes and a sin will be forgiven for every step. This will be his reward until he enters the Masjid." [*Muslim v. 1 p.234*]

Sayyidina Abu Qatādah رضى الله عنه reports that with reference to the fast of the day of Arafah (9th of Dhul Hijjah), the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that it is strongly hoped that Allāh will forgive the sins of the past year and the sins of the following year. With regard to the fast of the day of Āshura (10th of

Muharram) he said that it is strongly hoped that Allāh will forgive the sins of the previous year. [*Muslim v. 1 p.3 67*]

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Whoever sends ten durūds (salutations) to me, Allāh will confer ten mercies on him, forgive ten of his sins, and raise him by ten ranks." [*Nasai v. 1 p.191*]

Note: The Ahadīth mentioning the expiation of sins refer to minor sins. Certain narrations of Muslim contain the clause, "As long as major sins are abstained from." This indicates that major sins are not forgiven by good deeds.

Lesson: Scholars *(Ulama)* have mentioned that if a person's good deeds are greater in number than his minor sins, his major sins may be lessened by the surplus of good deeds. If there is still an excess thereafter, his ranks in the Hereafter will be elevated thereby.

"This is an advice to those who will take heed." i.e. The Qur'ān gives advice to those who will accept the advice. The verse could also imply that this Surah and all its contents are an advice to them. However, it will not serve to advise those who do not accept it and prefer to argue about it.

"Be patient (continue to fulfil your obligation and you will continue to be rewarded), *for undoubtedly Allāh does not put to waste the reward of those who do good."*

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ أُولُوا بَقِيَّةٍ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْفَسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا مِّمَّنْ أَنجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَاتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَا أُتْرِفُوا فِيهِ وَكَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ
(116) وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُونَ (117) وَلَوْ شَاءَ
رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً ۖ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ (118) إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذَٰلِكَ
خَلَقَهُمْ ۗ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ (119)

(116) Besides a few of them whom We had rescued (from punishment), why were there no more wise men from the nations of the past, who would forbid corruption in the land? The oppressors followed the luxuries they enjoyed and were criminals. (117) It does not behove your Lord to destroy cities unjustly when their inhabitants engaged in reformation. (118) If your Lord had willed, He would have made all people a single nation, but they will always be disputing... (119) .... except those upon whom your Lord has mercy. Allāh had created them for this. The decree of your Lord shall certainly be fulfilled that "I will definitely fill Hell with the multitude of man and Jinn."

THERE WERE FEW WISE MEN FROM THE PAST NATIONS WHO PREVENTED CORRUPTION

Allāh poses a rhetorical question when He says, *"Besides a few of them whom*

We had rescued (from punishment), *why were there no more wise men from the nations of the past, who would forbid corruption in the land?"* Other commentators have translated the verses as *"Besides a few of them whom We had rescued* (from punishment), *there were no more wise men from the nations of the past, who would forbid corruption in the land."* In the second instance, the verse is not a question, but a statement of fact.

"The oppressors followed the luxuries they enjoyed and were criminals." The disbelievers *(kuffār)* adhered to their beliefs of disbelief *(kufr)* because of the riches they possessed. They continued to sin because of their intoxication with these worldly possessions. As a result of their crimes, Allāh finally destroyed them. The only ones who were saved from Allāh's punishment were those few who forbade evil and corruption.

This verse warns the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that they also should not be carried away by their wealth. All of them, especially the leaders, should make every attempt to forbid evil.

Allāh then says, *"It does not behove your Lord to destroy cities unjustly when their inhabitants engaged in reformation."* Allāh never oppresses anyone. When He decides to punish a nation, it is purely on account of their disbelief *(kufr)*, polytheism *(shirk)* and sins. One of these sins is that they fail to reform themselves and others i.e. they do not prevent evil despite possessing the ability to do so. Allāh will not punish them as long as they are making attempts to reform.

Sayyidina Jarīr bin Abdullāh رضى الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "When a person commits sins and the people do not prevent him despite having the ability to do so, Allāh will inflict a punishment on them even before their deaths." [*Abu Dawūd v. 2 p.240*]

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will inflict widespread punishment on the nation that does not prevent sins being perpetrated in their midst despite having the ability to do so. [*Ibid*]

The above interpretation is the most comprehensive in my humble opinion, although commentators have cited numerous other interpretations.

"If your Lord had willed, He would have made all people a single nation..." Allāh will not force all to become Muslims. Rather, He has set the system that people are granted the choice to either accept Islām or remain as disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Both ways have been outlined for them.

Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"Speak the truth from your Lord. Whomsoever is willing, should believe, and whoever is unwilling should remain as a disbeliever. We have surely prepared for the oppressors a Fire, the walls of which will encompass them."* [*Surah 18, verse 29*]

".....but they will always be disputing, except those upon whom your Lord has mercy. "The believers and the non-believers will always be at loggerheads. Only those whom Allāh wishes to shower with His mercy will be guided to accept the truth and remain firm on it.

"Allāh had created them for this." *i.e.* Allāh had created them so that they participate in this dispute. The result of this is that they will eventually be classified into one of two groups. These groups are, as Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"A group shall be in Heaven (Jannah), while another shall be in the Blaze."* [*Surah* 42, *verse* 7]

"The decree of your Lord shall certainly be fulfilled that 'I will definitely fill Hell with the multitude of man and Jinn."' The disbelievers *(kuffār)* and sinners of these two creations will fill Hell. This verse is similar to that in Surah Alif Lām Mīm Sajdah, where Allāh says, *"If We willed, We would have granted every soul its guidance. However, the decree has issued from Me that I will surely fill Hell with a collection of man and jinn."* [*Surah 32, verse 13*]

This being the case, the presence of disbelieving *(kuffār)* humans and disbelieving *(kuffār)* Jinn in the world will be inevitable. Allāh mentions in Surahs A'rāf that He told Iblīs, *"Get away from here Heaven (Jannah) disgraced and banished. Whoever of them will follow you, I shall fill Hell with the lot of you."* In Surah Sād, Allāh tells him, *"I shall certainly fill Hell with yourself and all those of them who follow you."* [*Surah 38, verse 85*]

وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِۦ فُؤَادَكَ ۚ وَجَآءَكَ فِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَقُّ
وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿120﴾ وَقُل لِّلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ٱعْمَلُوا۟ عَلَىٰ مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنَّا
عَٰمِلُونَ ﴿121﴾ وَٱنتَظِرُوٓا۟ إِنَّا مُنتَظِرُونَ ﴿122﴾ وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ
ٱلْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُۥ فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿123﴾

(120) We narrate to you all the narratives of the messengers so that your heart may be strengthened by them. In these narratives the truth has come to you, as well as advice and a reminder for the believers. (121) Tell those who do not believe, "Continue to perform deeds where you are. We are also performing... (122) ...And wait. We are also waiting." (123) To Allāh belongs the unseen things of the heavens and the earth and unto Him alone will all matters return. So worship Him and rely on Him only. Your Lord is not unaware of what you do.

THE INCIDENTS OF THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام SERVED TO STRENGTHEN THE RESOLVE OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Since most of Surah Hūd deals with the narratives of various Prophet عليهم السلام, Allāh concludes the Surah by saying, *"We narrate to you all the narratives of the messengers so that your heart may be strengthened by them. In these narratives the truth has come to you, as well as advice and a reminder for the believers."* The object of all these narratives is not mere story-telling; the believers *(Mu'minīn)* should derive lessens from them and take heed not to commit the same errors as the previous nations.

"Tell those who do not believe, 'Continue to perform deeds where you are. We are

also performing. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had fulfilled his task of propagation. If the disbelievers *(kuffār)* do not respond, then they may do as they please. Allāh's punishment is imminent. If it does not afflict them in this world, it surely will in the Hereafter. Therefore, *"wait! We are also waiting."*

"To Allāh belongs the (knowledge of all) unseen things of the heavens and the earth and unto Him alone will all matters return." Only then will the disbelievers *(kuffār)* realise the folly of their ways. Allāh says in another verse that they will then exclaim, *"If only we were given the chance to return. Then we would have been from the believers."* However, it will then be too late.

In conclusion, Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says, *"So worship Him and rely on Him only."* Then Allāh addresses all of mankind when He says that they should always bear in mind that, *"Your Lord is not unaware of what you do."* He will reward and punish all according to their actions.

RECITING SURAH HŪD ON A FRIDAY

Sayyidina Ka'b رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Recite Surah Hūd on Fridays." [*Mishkāt p. 189*]

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سورة يوسف

Makkan	Surah Yusuf	Verses 111

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

الٓر ۚ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ (1) إِنَّآ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (2) نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ ٱلْقَصَصِ بِمَآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ وَإِن كُنتَ مِن قَبْلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلْغَٰفِلِينَ (3) إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّى رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِى سَٰجِدِينَ (4) قَالَ يَٰبُنَىَّ لَا تَقْصُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلَىٰٓ إِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيدُوا۟ لَكَ كَيْدًا ۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ (5) وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَجْتَبِيكَ رَبُّكَ وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِن تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ وَيُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰٓ ءَالِ يَعْقُوبَ كَمَآ أَتَمَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَبَوَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (6)

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Rā. These are the verses of the clear Book. (2) Undoubtedly We have revealed it as an Arabic Qur'ān so that you may understand. (3) We narrate to you a most beautiful story in this Qur'ān that We reveal to you. Before this you were of the unwary. (4) When Yusuf said to his father, "O my father! Indeed I have seen eleven stars, the sun and the moon all prostrating to me." (5) His father said, "O my beloved son! Do not relate this dream to your brothers; otherwise they will plot against you. Undoubtedly Devil (Shaytān) is a manifest enemy unto man." (6) "In this manner has your Lord chosen you, taught you the interpretation of dreams, and completed His bounty upon you and the family of Ya'qūb, just as He had completed it upon your two forefathers, Ibrahīm and Is'hāq. Indeed your Lord is All Knowing, The Wise,

THE DREAM OF SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام THE INTERPRETATION OF HIS FATHER AND HIS WARNING TO HIS SON

This Surah relates the detailed story of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Allāh

describes this intriguing narrative as "*most beautiful story.*" The first people to be addressed by the Qur'ān were the Arabs, for which reason Allāh revealed the Qur'ān in the Arabic language. If it were in any other language they could have argued that they cannot understand it, and therefore cannot accept it. Allāh says, "*Undoubtedly We have revealed it as an Arabic Qur'ān so that you may understand.*" Only the obstinate ones denied the Qur'ān.

This story, as well as many others, indicate that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was indeed the true Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم because, being unlettered, it was not possible that he could have learnt of these incidents from anyone but Allāh. Even the Jews and the Christians realised this fact. However, most of them still refused to accept, although some of them did accept Islām after the revelation of Surah Yusuf.

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 4 p.2*) records from Bayhaqi a narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه in which he says that a certain Jewish scholar heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reciting Surah Yusuf. Then he asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who had taught him this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that Allāh had taught it to him.

He left and went to some other Jews, telling them that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was reciting what was revealed in the Torah. He then took them all to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, where they recognised him to be the final the Prophet according to what they read in their scriptures. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited for them Surah Yusuf, whereupon they were all taken aback and accepted Islām.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, whose other name was Isra'īl. Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام and the grandson of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and his brother Bin Yamīn were from the same mother, while the other ten children of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام were from another wife.

One day, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام narrated his dream to his father saying, "O *my father! Indeed I have seen eleven stars, the sun and the moon all prostrating to me.*" His father realised the interpretation to be that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would ascend to great heights and that his eleven brothers, father and mother would all prostrate to him at some time.

Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام therefore warned his son saying, "O *my beloved son! Do not relate this dream to your brothers, otherwise they will plot against you. Undoubtedly Devil (Shaytān) is a manifest enemy unto man.*" He feared that the brothers may try to harm Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام so that he does not attain to the height that Allāh wished to elevate him to. Although he realised that Allāh's decree would always prevail and that the brothers could not prevent this, he feared the harm they could cause to Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Allāh would elevate whom He willed.

He further told his son, "*In this manner has your Lord chosen you, taught you the interpretation of dreams, and completed His bounty upon you* (i.e. the bounty of the Prophethood) *and the family of Ya'qūb, just as He had completed it upon your two*

forefathers, Ibrahīm and Is'hāq. Indeed your Lord is All Knowing, The Wise." Allāh's decisions are based on His divine knowledge and wisdom.

۞ لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي يُوسُفَ وَإِخْوَتِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٌ لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ
أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨﴾ ٱقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ أَوِ
ٱطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ قَوْمًا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾ قَالَ قَآئِلٌ
مِّنْهُمْ لَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ وَأَلْقُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ ٱلْجُبِّ يَلْتَقِطْهُ بَعْضُ ٱلسَّيَّارَةِ إِن كُنتُمْ
فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

(7) Surely in the story of Yusuf and his brothers are many signs for the questioners. (8) When the brothers said, "Verily Yusuf and his brother are more beloved to our father than us, even though we are a large group. Indeed our father is in manifest error." (9) "Kill Yusuf or throw him in a distant land, after which the attention of your father will be reserved for you only. Thereafter you can be fortunate people." (10) One of them said, "Do not kill Yusuf, but throw him in a dark well so that some travellers may take him away; if you really intend doing something."

THE BROTHERS OF SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام CONSULT WHETHER TO KILL HIM OR TO BANISH HIM TO ANOTHER LAND

Allāh says, *"Surely in the story of Yusuf and his brothers are many signs for the questioners."* Commentators have mentioned that some Jews asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the story of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to test whether he really was Allāh's Prophet. After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the Surah to them, they could witness ample signs that he was truly Allāh's Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Thereafter Allāh continues with the story. He says, *"When the brothers said, 'Verily Yusuf and his* (real) *brother* (Bin Yamīn) *are more beloved to our father than us, even though we are a large group* (and therefore more useful to our father). *Indeed our father is in manifest error."* They then decided that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام will have to be removed if they were to enjoy their father's attention, since he was most beloved of their father.

They therefore resolved, *"Kill Yusuf or throw him in a distant land, after which the attention of your father will be reserved for you only. Thereafter you can be fortunate people."* They thought that this will earn them their father's favour.

"One of them said, 'Do not kill Yusuf but throw him in a dark well so that some travellers (when searching for water) may take him away; if you really intend doing something.'" In this way their objective would have been attained and the life of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would be spared. Ibn Kathīr reports from Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه and Muhammad bin Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه that this was the opinion of the eldest brother, whose name was Rubīl. Since Allāh had intended great

things for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام in the future, this opinion was accepted.

Another interpretation of the phrase, *"Thereafter you can be fortunate people,"* has been forwarded by Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه. He translates the sentence as *"Thereafter you can be righteous people."* This means that they had understood that they would be perpetrating a crime by doing as they planned, but they thought that they could always repent afterwards and mend their ways.

قَالُوا۟ يَـٰٓأَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَ۬نَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَنَـٰصِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾ أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَرْتَعْ وَيَلْعَبْ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَـٰفِظُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ قَالَ إِنِّى لَيَحْزُنُنِىٓ أَن تَذْهَبُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَأَخَافُ أَن يَأْكُلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَأَنتُمْ عَنْهُ غَـٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ قَالُوا۟ لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّخَـٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

(11) They said, "O our Father.' What ails you that you do not trust Yusuf with us whereas we are his well-wishers?" (12) "Send him with us tomorrow so that he may eat and play with us. We shall take good care of him." (13) He said, "Indeed it grieves me that he should go with you. I fear that you would be negligent of him and then a wolf would devour him." (14) They replied, "If a wolf should devour him while we are a strong group, then we would surely be at a loss."

THE BROTHERS REQUEST SAYYIDINA YA'QŪB عليه السلام TO SEND SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام WITH THEM AND HE EXPRESSES THE FEAR THAT A WOLF MAY DEVOUR HIM

To set their sinister plan in motion, the brothers required to take Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام away from their father. However, they needed the father's permission to take him away. Therefore, *"They said, 'O our Father! What ails you that you do not trust Yusuf with us whereas we are his well-wishers?"'* They proposed, *"Send him with us tomorrow so that he may eat and play with us. We shall take good care of him.*

Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام gave them two reasons for his reluctance to send Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام with them. The first was that *"He said, 'Indeed it grieves me that he should go with you'"* He knew that he would not be able to rest in peace until Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام returned.

The second reason he gave was, *"I fear that you should be negligent of him (while engaging in grazing or some sport) and then a wolf would devour him."*

They could not reply to the first reason because it was a natural emotion that overcame every father. However, with regard to the second reason *"They replied, 'If a wolf should devour him while we are a strong group, then we would surely be at a loss."'* i.e. We would be prepared to lose our lives in his defence. They impressed upon him that no wolf could attack Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام while all of them were present.

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا بِهِۦ وَأَجْمَعُوٓا أَن يَجْعَلُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ ٱلْجُبِّ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُم بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَجَآءُوٓ أَبَاهُمْ عِشَآءً يَبْكُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ قَالُوا يَٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِندَ مَتَٰعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ ٱلذِّئْبُ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صَٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَجَآءُو عَلَىٰ قَمِيصِهِۦ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ ۚ قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

(15) When they took him and together resolved to throw him into a dark well, We sent revelation to him that you will certainly remind them of this matter when they will not realise. (16) They came weeping to their father that night. (17) They said, "O our father! We went racing and left Yusuf with our goods, when a wolf devoured him. But you will not believe us even though we are truthful" (18) They came with false blood on his shirt. Ya'qūb عليه السلام said, "But your souls have contrived this matter for you. However, I shall exercise patience without any complaint, and I shall seek Allāh's assistance against what you have devised."

THE BROTHERS THROW YUSUF عليه السلام IN THE WELL AND SMEAR FALSE BLOOD ON HIS SHIRT. THEIR FATHER TELLS THEM THAT THEY HAVE DEVISED THIS SCHEME

The brothers finally convinced their father to sent Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام with them. Allāh says, *"When they took him and together resolved to throw him into a dark well, We sent revelation to him that you will certainly remind them of this matter when they will not realise* (that the person reminding them is the one whom they threw into the well).'

The time did finally come, as will be related towards the end of the Surah (verse 89), when he told them, *"Do you know what you did to Yusuf and his brother when you were ignorant?"* This revelation sent by Allāh consoled Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام because he realised that Allāh would rescue him from the well and eventually grant him an elevated position from which he could fearlessly remind his brothers of their deed.

Continuing with the story, Allāh says, *"They came weeping to their father that night. They said, 'O our father! We went racing and left Yusuf with our goods, when a wolf devoured him. But you will not believe us even though we are truthful."*

To substantiate their claim, they removed the shirt of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام before throwing him into the well and smeared the blood of some animal on it. Referring to this Allāh says, *"They came with false blood on his shirt."*

However, they failed to rip up the shirt to indicate that the wolf devoured Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Therefore, when Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام saw the shirt in perfect order, he realised that they were lying. For this reason, he told them, *"But your souls have contrived this matter for you. However* (nothing can now be done to rectify the matter, therefore), *I shall exercise patience without any complaint,*

and I shall seek Allāh's assistance against what you have devised."

It is learnt from this that the believer *(Mu'min)* exercises patience and seeks Allāh's assistance at the same time.

(19) A caravan approached and they sent a person to fetch water. He lowered his bucket and exclaimed, "What luck! There is a boy here!" They hid him as trading stock, and Allāh had perfect knowledge of what they did. (20) They sold him at the meagre price of a few dirhams and they showed no interest in him.

SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام IS REMOVED FROM THE WELL AND SOLD AS A SLAVE

While Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was in the well, a caravan halted nearby and the travellers sent a person to get water for them. As he lowered his bucket into the well, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام grabbed hold of it and the person was utterly surprised to see him hanging onto it. He shouted, *"What luck! There is a boy here!"*

When he took Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to the rest of the group, they decided to sell him as a slave in Egypt. Therefore, *"They hid him as trading stock, and Allāh had perfect knowledge of what they did."*

The brothers of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام looked for him when they did not find him in the well. When they found him with the caravan, they told the people that he was their escaped slave, but they now desired to sell him. So *"They sold him at the meagre price of a few dirhams and they showed no interest in him."* Although they could have asked a better price for him, they accepted a meagre amount because they merely wished to get rid of him.

Ibn Kathīr reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that they sold him for 20 Dirhams. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the figure was 22 Dirhams, while according to Sayyidina Ikrama رحمة الله عليه, it was 40 Dirhams. Since no law of the Shari'ah is derived from this, it is not necessary determine it accurately. However, two Ahadīth will be quoted here in this regard.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh says, 'I shall be the plaintiff against three people on the Day of Judgement. (They are):

1. *The one who made a pledge using My name and then breached it.*
2. *The one who sold a free person as a slave and then consumed the price.*
3. *"The person who extracted labour from another and then did not pay him his dues."* [*Mishkāt p. 258*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Salāh of three persons will not be accepted. (These are):

1. *The person who leads people in Salāh while they dislike him.*
2. *The person who performs Salāh when the time is about to expire.*
3. *"The person who makes another a slave."* [*Abu Dawūd and Ibn Majah*]

Therefore, in addition to their sin of taking Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام away from his father, the brothers earned the sin of making a slave of a free person.

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِى ٱشْتَرَىٰهُ مِن مِّصْرَ لِٱمْرَأَتِهِۦٓ أَكْرِمِى مَثْوَىٰهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِنُعَلِّمَهُۥ مِن تَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرِهِۦ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (21) وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُۥٓ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (22)

(21) The person from Egypt who bought Yusuf عليه السلام told his wife, "Take proper care of him. Perchance he may be of use to us or we may take him as a son." In this manner We granted authority to Yusuf in that land so that We may teach him the interpretation of dreams. Allāh is Predominant over His affairs, but most people do not know. (22) When he came of age, We granted him wisdom and knowledge. Thus do We reward those who do good.

A MINISTER OF EGYPT BUYS SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام AND CARES FOR HIM SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام RECEIVES THE PROPHETHOOD

The people of the caravan sold Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to the minister who was in charge of the finances of Egypt. This was the first step for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to the kingship of Egypt. This minister instructed his wife saying, *"Take proper care of him. Perchance he may be of use to us or we may take him as a son."* It is reported that the minister made the above statement because he had no children.

According to certain commentators, the minister's name was Qitfir. They attribute this narration to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. His wife's name is famously known to be Zulaykha. Some say that her name was Rā'īl. However, the same youth that was once in a dark well was now enjoying the luxuries of a minister's home. The people of Egypt also began to look up to him because he lived with the minister. Referring to this Allāh says, "*in this manner We granted authority to Yusuf in that land...*"

"...so that We may teach him the interpretation of dreams." This knowledge contributed to his becoming a minister himself, as will be seen later.

"Allāh is Predominant over His affairs, but most people do not know.'! Allāh does as He pleases and none can prevent Him from doing so. Allāh willed that

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would receive the necessary education and proper upbringing in the home of the minister. Since he was to become the minister of Egypt's finances at a later stage, he was well trained in the field while staying with the minister.

"When he came of age, We granted him wisdom and knowledge." This refers to his receiving the position of the Prophethood. Therefore the revelation that he received in the well was not Prophetic revelation, but inspiration that occurs to non Prophets. The same occurred to the mother of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, about whom Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"We sent revelation (inspiration) to the mother of Mūsa to suckle him...."* [*Surah 28, verse 7*]

"Thus We reward those who do good. " This verses refers to those people who possess the quality of 'ihsān.' They are those who possess sincere intention when acting, and they perform their actions properly. Allāh will reward them well.

وَرَٰوَدَتْهُ ٱلَّتِى هُوَ فِى بَيْتِهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ وَغَلَّقَتِ ٱلْأَبْوَٰبَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ۚ قَالَ مَعَاذَ ٱللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ رَبِّىٓ أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَاىَ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

(23) The woman in whose house he was, attempted to seduce him to achieve her objectives. She locked the doors and said, "I am telling you to come to me." He said, "I seek refuge with Allāh! Indeed my caretaker has treated me honourably. Surely the oppressors will never succeed."

THE WIFE OF THE MINISTER ATTEMPTS TO SEDUCE SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام BUT HE REMAIN CHASTE

Since Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was an extremely handsome youth, the wife of the minister became infatuated with him. In her attempts to seduce him, she locked all the doors of the house and then requested him to respond to her charms. The trial was indeed great for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. He was young and healthy and the woman was not just any low class person but the wife of the minister. He had been raised in her home and it was therefore difficult to refuse her.

Despite all of this, he declined by saying, *"I seek refuge with Allāh!"* He understood that only Allāh could protect him from falling into sin. He then added, *'indeed my caretaker* (i.e. your husband) *has treated me honourably."* He mentioned to her that it would be disloyal of him to respond to her desires, since her husband was the one who had treated him so well and cared for him so generously.

"Surely the oppressors will never succeed." If he were to accept her proposal to commit adultery, he would be oppressing himself by subjecting himself to the punishment of the Hereafter. In addition to this he would be betraying his benefactor viz, the minister.

Certain commentators have mentioned that the word *'Rabbi'* (translated above as *'my caretaker')* refers to Allāh. The Quranic word 'my Rabb (*Lord*)' may

also be literally translated as 'master,' 'caretaker,' and 'owner.' The prohibition in the Ahadīth from calling a person *"My Lord (My Rabb),"* refers to usage of the term in general speech. This is so that none may abuse this term.

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِۦ ۖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَآ أَن رَّءَا بُرْهَٰنَ رَبِّهِۦ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ ٱلسُّوٓءَ
وَٱلْفَحْشَآءَ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ٱلْمُخْلَصِينَ (24) وَٱسْتَبَقَا ٱلْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُۥ مِن
دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا ٱلْبَابِ ۚ قَالَتْ مَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوٓءًا إِلَّآ أَن يُسْجَنَ أَوْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (25) قَالَ هِىَ رَٰوَدَتْنِى عَن نَّفْسِى ۚ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِهَآ إِن كَانَ
قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ مِن قُبُلٍ فَصَدَقَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ (26) وَإِن كَانَ قَمِيصُهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٍ
فَكَذَبَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ (27) فَلَمَّا رَءَا قَمِيصَهُۥ قُدَّ مِن دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ مِن
كَيْدِكُنَّ ۖ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ (28) يُوسُفُ أَعْرِضْ عَنْ هَٰذَا ۚ وَٱسْتَغْفِرِى لِذَنۢبِكِ ۖ
إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ ٱلْخَاطِـِٔينَ (29)

(24) She was determined to achieve he objectives from him, and he also would have intended the same had he not seen the proof of his Lord. In this manner (Our fate had decreed the matter) so that We averted evil and lewdness from him. Indeed he was from Our sincere bondsmen. (25) They both raced for the door and she tore his shirt from the back. Then they encountered her master at the door. She said, "The only penalty for him who intended evil with your wife is that he be imprisoned, or some other torturous punishment." (26) Yusuf عليه السلام said, "It was she who tried to seduce me to attain her motives." A witness from her family testified by saying, "If his shirt is torn from the front, then she is truthful and he is from the liars. (27) However, if his shirt is torn from the back, then she is lying and he is from the truthful." (28) When he saw that his shirt was torn from the back, he said, "This is definitely from the trickery of you women. Your trickery is indeed very dangerous." (29) "O Yusuf! Overlook this. (O woman!) Seek forgiveness for your sin. You were truly of the sinners.

THE TWO RACE FOR THE DOOR AND FIND HER HUSBAND THERE. HE ADMONISHES HER FOR BEING SINFUL AND ENJOINS HER TO REPENT

"She was determined to achieve her objectives from him (as can be seen by the fact that she locked all the doors), *and he also would have intended the same had he not seen the proof of his Lord."* Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was the Holy Prophet of Allāh and the entire Ummah is unanimous that no Prophet عليه السلام could commit a sin. This being the case, the question then arises that what is the meaning of the phrase that he *"intended the same?"*

The simplest explanation is that which is understood from the translation of the verse i.e. *"he also would have intended the same had he not seen the proof of his*

Lord." Since he saw the *"proof of his Lord "*, he did not even intend to commit the sin.

Certain commentators have interpreted the verse *"intended the same," to* mean that his natural human instincts intended to commit the act; however he restrained this when he saw the *"proof of his Lord."*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 12 p.214*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the *"proof of his Lord"* was a vision of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام that he saw before him. In this vision Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام struck him on the chest. [*Hākimi v. 2 p.346*]

The "Hilya[illegible] Abu Nuaim reports from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that when she intended to se[illegible] Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, Zulaykha covered an idol that stood in the corner of the home. When Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام asked her why she was doing that, she replied that she was ashamed of committing the sin in front of her god. Thereupon he said, "If you are ashamed of an idol that can neither eat nor drink (i.e. it has no life), how can I not be ashamed of my Lord, Who is aware of every person and every action?" This incident was the *"proof"* that he saw.

Other commentators maintain that this *"proof"* was the *"wisdom and knowledge"* (*verse* 22) that Allāh gave to him when he attained the Prophethood. It was this that prevented him from succumbing to her charms.

Believers *(Mu'minīn)* are also reminded by Allāh when they intend to perpetrate a sin. The reminder is in the form of uneasiness and hesitance within the heart. Sayyidina Nawās bin Sam'ān رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once cited an example to them. The example was of a straight road having two walls on either side, both of them having open doors with curtains drawn upon them. At the beginning of the road is another door from where a caller calls out, "O people! Travel the road, but do not be influenced by what is around you.

At the end of the road is another door. Whenever a person tries to open one of the doors at the side, a caller calls out from that door saying, "Shame on you! Do not open the door! If you open the door and enter into it (it will not be good for you)."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then explained that the example of the straight road is that of Islām. The walls on either side are the limits set by Allāh, and the open doors indicate Allāh's prohibitions. The caller at the beginning of the road is Allāh's Book and the caller at every door is the admonisher that is in the heart of every Muslim. [*Bayhaqi in Shu'abul Imān v. 5 p.445*]

If every Muslim has such a reminder, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام must have also possessed the same.

"In this manner (Our fate had decreed the matter) so that We *averted evil and lewdness from him. Indeed he was from Our sincere bondsmen."* In his determination to escape, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام raced for the door and Zulaykha ran after him. In an attempt to stop him, she grabbed hold of the back of his shirt. However, he still raced on and *"she tore his shirt from the back."*

Although the doors were locked, he still ran towards them in an earnest attempt to escape. Allāh assisted him by throwing the door open for him. The lesson is learnt that a person should do whatever is in his capability to escape sin, even though the odds are against him. Allāh will do the rest for him.

Certain commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام raced for a door that had a window in it, from which he managed to escape. Whatever the case, Allāh allowed him an exit. As they exited the door *"they encountered her master (her husband) at the door."* Seizing the opportunity to absolve herself of blame, *"She said, 'The only penalty for him who intended evil with your wife is that he be imprisoned, or some other torturous punishment."'*

"Yusuf عليه السلام said, 'it was she who tried to seduce me to attain her motives."' It is learnt from this that defending one's honour is not against piety, even though it entails attributing the blame to the guilty party. A believer *(Mu'min)* should never labour under suspicion.

The minister lived many years with Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and knew that he was upright and pious. It was for this reason that he did not immediately accept the word of his wife. It is possible that he believed that she was guilty from the very outset but did not say anything until the matter resolved.

Allāh resolved the matter by causing an infant child from her family to serve as witness to the incident. Allāh says, *"A witness from her family testified by saying, 'If his shirt is torn from the front, then she is truthful and he is from the liars. However, if his shirt is torn from the back, then she is lying and he is from the truthful."*

"When he (the husband) saw that his shirt was torn from the back, he said, 'This is definitely from the trickery of you women. Your trickery is indeed very dangerous."

Once, on the way to perform the Eid Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed some women saying, "I have not seen anything more destructive to the intelligence of a wise man than you women." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.197*]

In another hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The most destructive test to man that will be left after my demise will be that of women." [*Mishkāt p. 267*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Fear Allāh and fear the trial of women, for verily the first cause of corruption among the Bani Isra'īl was because of women." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 353*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "Women are the snares of Shaytān (i.e. Shaytān uses them to entrap man in sin and vice)." [*Mishkāt p. 444]*

The witness did not testify that he saw what happened, but mentioned this fact in such a manner that it clearly exposed the guilt of the woman.

Hākimi reports in his "Mustadrak" from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم narrated the following incident to them. He told them that when he ascended the heavens during the ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, he smelt a most beautiful scent. When he asked the angels accompanying him from where the scent came, they said that it was from the woman who used to comb the hair of Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* family.

Once she dropped the comb while combing the hair of Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* daughter. Thereupon she said, "Bismillah!" The girl asked her whose name she had taken, and why did she not take the name of her father Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* instead. She replied, "I have taken the name of the One Who is my Lord, your Lord and the Lord of your father." When Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* daughter threatened to report that matter to her father, the lady permitted her to do so.

When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* learnt of the incident, he summoned the lady with her children. When she appeared before Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, she asked that a request of hers be fulfilled. When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* asked what the request was, she replied that she wanted her bones and the bones of her children to be buried. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* acknowledged this.

Thereafter he began to kill every one of her children and cast their bodies in a pit or in a fire. Eventually only the smallest child was left. This child was still feeding off the breast of the mother. This little child spoke to the mother saying, "O my mother! Be patient because you are on the truth." This child was then disposed of with the mother.

After relating this account, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that throughout history there have been only four infants who spoke in their infancy. The first was this very child. The second was the witness for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. The third was the one who testified to the innocence of the monk Juraij, and the fourth was Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. [*Hākimi v. 2 p.496*]

This hadith proves that the witness was an infant. According to certain commentators, the infant was the son of Zulaykha's maternal aunt, while others maintain that it was the son of her paternal uncle.

After learning of the truth, the minister said, *"O Yusuf Overlook this."* i.e. . Let the matter rest and do not disclose it to anyone.

Then, turning his attention to his wife, he said, *"Seek forgiveness for your sin. You were truly of the sinners."* Although she was unsuccessful in her attempt, she was still sinful for trying to seduce him and making the effort to achieve her aims.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The adultery of the eyes is to look (at a non Mahram), the adultery of the ears is to listen (to one), the adultery of the tongue is to speak (to one), the adultery of the hands is to hold (to one), the adultery of the feet is to walk (to one), the adultery of the heart is to desire (one), and the private organs either accomplish the act (of adultery) or deny the same." [*Mishkāt p. 20*]

The question is raised how could she seek forgiveness when she was not a believer? In reply, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that although the people there worshipped idols, they believed in the existence of a Creator. They acknowledged sin and that one would be punished for it. This belief is even prevalent among the Hindus of India.

۞ وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي ٱلْمَدِينَةِ ٱمْرَأَتُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ تُرَٰوِدُ فَتَىٰهَا عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا حُبًّا

إِنَّا لَنَرَىٰهَا فِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتۡ بِمَكۡرِهِنَّ أَرۡسَلَتۡ إِلَيۡهِنَّ وَأَعۡتَدَتۡ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَـٔٗا
وَءَاتَتۡ كُلَّ وَٰحِدَةٖ مِّنۡهُنَّ سِكِّينٗا وَقَالَتِ ٱخۡرُجۡ عَلَيۡهِنَّۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَيۡنَهُۥٓ أَكۡبَرۡنَهُۥ وَقَطَّعۡنَ أَيۡدِيَهُنَّ
وَقُلۡنَ حَٰشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَٰذَا بَشَرًا إِنۡ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا مَلَكٞ كَرِيمٞ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالَتۡ فَذَٰلِكُنَّ ٱلَّذِي لُمۡتُنَّنِي
فِيهِۖ وَلَقَدۡ رَٰوَدتُّهُۥ عَن نَّفۡسِهِۦ فَٱسۡتَعۡصَمَۖ وَلَئِن لَّمۡ يَفۡعَلۡ مَآ ءَامُرُهُۥ لَيُسۡجَنَنَّ وَلَيَكُونٗا مِّنَ
ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(30) Some women of the town said, "The minister's wife attempts to seduce her slave to fulfil her motives. Love has certainly overwhelmed her. Indeed we deem her to be in manifest error." (31) When she heard of their plot, she sent for them and prepared a meeting place for them, setting cushions there. She gave each of them a knife and then told Yusuf, "Come out before them!" When they saw him, they were taken aback, cut their hands and exclaimed, "Allāh is Pure! This cannot be a human! He is surely a noble angel!" (32) She said, "This is what you were criticising me for. Indeed I attempted to seduce him to achieve my motives, but he escaped. If he does not do as I command him, he shall certainly be imprisoned and he will definitely become of those humiliated."

THE WOMEN OF THE TOWN CRITICISE THE WIFE OF THE MINISTER, SHE INVITES THEM TO GIVE HER REPLY AND THEY CUT THEIR HANDS

Although the minister told Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to keep the matter a secret, the news somehow reached the women of the town. They began to gossip among themselves and expressed disbelief that a married woman of noble class could become infatuated with a slave. Neither were they compatible in rank, nor in age. The only reason they saw was that they said, *"Love has certainly overwhelmed her."* Love has blinded her to all sense. They added, *"Indeed we deem her to be in manifest error."*

"When she (the minister's wife) heard of their plot..." The word *"plot"* is used because, although they seemed to be merely gossiping, their actual plan was that they wanted her to show Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to them in an attempt to exonerate herself. *["Ruhul Ma'āni"]*

So she, *"sent for them? and prepared a meeting place for them, setting cushions there (to make it comfortable for them). She gave each of them a knife..."* Certain commentators have mentioned that she gave them the knives to cut some meat that they could not eat by merely biting. Others state that the knives were to cut some fruit like oranges that also needed cutting. A rare form of Qur'ānic recitation supports this opinion because it contains the word "Mutaka'an," which is translated as 'citron' or 'orange.' "Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported this recitation from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه.

At the precise moment when the women were cutting, the minister's wife

called to Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام saying, *"Come out before them!"* The result was *"When they saw him, they were taken aback,* (and, in their amazement, instead of cutting the food before them, they) *cut their hands and exclaimed, 'Allāh is Pure! This cannot be a human! He is surely a noble angel!"*

They said this because it is commonly believed that angels possess beauty beyond comprehension and that devils are ugly. Allāh had bestowed Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام with exceptional beauty. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم met him when he went on ascension *(Mi'rāj)* and said, *"Indeed he has been conferred half the beauty of the world."*

When the women cut their hands, the minister's wife told them, *"This is what you were criticising me for."* She meant to express to them that just as they were unable to contain themselves when they saw him and cut their hands, she was unable to prevent herself from falling in love with him.

She continued to tell them, *"Indeed I attempted to seduce him to achieve my motives, but he escaped."* She now admitted to the women what she had previously denied before her husband. In this statement she exonerated Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام from blame. However, she was still not repentant and told them. *"If he does not do as I command him, he shall certainly be imprisoned and he will definitely become of those humiliated."*

قَالَ رَبِّ ٱلسِّجْنُ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُونَنِيٓ إِلَيْهِ ۖ وَإِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّي كَيْدَهُنَّ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ فَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ كَيْدَهُنَّ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٤﴾ ثُمَّ بَدَا لَهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ مَا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَيَسْجُنُنَّهُۥ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

(33) Yusuf عليه السلام prayed, "O my Lord! The prison is dearer to me than that towards which these women call me. If You do not avert their plot from me, I shall incline towards them and become of the ignorant." (34) So his Lord accepted his prayer and averted their plot from him. Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, All Knowing. (35) Then, after reviewing the signs, it occurred to them that they should imprison him for a while.

SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام PRAYS TO ALLĀH TO RATHER HAVE HIM IMPRISONED INSTEAD OF ALLOWING HIM TO FALL PREY TO THE PLOT OF THE WOMEN

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was never safe from the plots of the minister's wife since they shared the same home and she was adamant to seduce him yet again, as she had mentioned. She threatened to have him imprisoned if he did not comply with her wishes, and she had also made mention of imprisonment to her husband when she said, *"The only penalty for him who intended evil with your wife is that he be imprisoned, or some other torturous punishment."*

Since the other women were now also awestruck by his beauty, the additional danger now existed that they would also attempt to seduce him. Apprehensive of this, he prayed to Allāh saying, "O *my Lord! The prison is dearer*

to me than that towards which these women call me. If You do not avert their plot from me, (being overcome by my natural instincts) *I shall incline towards them and become of the ignorant."*

Even though the Prophets عليهم السلام were protected by Allāh from committing sins Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام made this supplication *(du'ā)* because of his profound aversion to sins. He feared becoming of those who do not practise their knowledge.

"So his Lord accepted his prayer and averted their plot from him. Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, All Knowing." Allāh made it such that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام eventually was sent to jail. The minister and his advisor were concerned about the situation. Although they realised that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was innocent, something had to be done to quell the growing speculation in the town since the women were carrying many tales to their husbands.

Therefore *"after reviewing the signs* [i.e. the innocence of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام], *it occurred to them that they should imprison him for a while* (until the tumult subsided)."

The first of the *"signs"* was that his shirt was torn from the back. The other was that an infant spoke in his defence, and the third was that he had sustained some injuries in his attempt to escape. There could have been several others as well.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported (*v. 9 p.184*) that when Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام made the above supplication to Allāh, Allāh told him, "O Yusuf! You have yourself asked to be imprisoned. If you had asked for safety, I would have granted it to you.' It is learnt from here that a person should never ask Allāh to resolve his problem in a specific manner. He should merely request Allāh to deliver him from the problem, and Allāh would do so in the most befitting manner. When a person presents the solution to Allāh, he could be placing himself in undue difficulty.

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once visited an ailing Muslim whose voice had become extremely weak and his body had become as frail as a fledgling. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recommended that he continues making supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh. Thereupon he said that he always prayed to Allāh to grant him the punishment for his sins in this world rather than in the next. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed, "Subhān Allāh! What resistance do you have against punishment? Why did you rather not pray thus, 'O Allāh! Grant me the good of this world and the good of the Hereafter and save me from the punishment of the Fire."' [*Muslim v. 2 p.343*]

Another Sahābi رضى الله عنه prayed to Allāh to grant him patience. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You have prayed for difficulty (because patience is only needed then), so now pray for safety." [*Mishkāt p. 214*]

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Ask Allāh for forgiveness and 'Āfiyah' (safety, good health and well being) for after belief *(Imān)* there is no greater wealth than Āfiyah." [*Mishkāt p. 219*]

وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ ٱلسِّجْنَ فَتَيَانِ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَآ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰنِىٓ أَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا وَقَالَ ٱلْءَاخَرُ إِنِّىٓ
أَرَىٰنِىٓ أَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَأْسِى خُبْزًا تَأْكُلُ ٱلطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ نَبِّئْنَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦٓ إِنَّا نَرَىٰكَ مِنَ
ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

(36) Two youths entered the prison with him. One of them said, "Indeed I see myself (in a dream) squeezing wine." The other said, "I see myself carrying bread upon my head, from which birds are eating." (They requested) "Inform us of the interpretation. We truly deem you to be of the righteous."

TWO CONVICTS ENTER THE PRISON AND REQUEST SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام TO INTERPRET THEIR DREAMS

The convicts in the jail were impressed by the exceptional behaviour of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. The light of the Prophethood that he bore as well as his apparent beauty impressed them. Even the jailer admitted that he would have freed Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام if he had the authority. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 2 p.426*]

Thereafter two new captives entered the jail. Commentators mention that certain conspirators had used the two of them in an attempt to assassinate the king of Egypt. The one served drinks to the king, while the other baked his bread. They were both bribed to poison the king.

Initially they both accepted the offer, but the one who served drinks later decided to abandon the plot. When the baker served the bread, the one who served drinks warned the king not to eat it because it was poisoned. Thereupon the baker warned the king not to drink anything since it was also poisoned.

The king then asked the server of drinks to drink from what he had served. He did so without hesitation and was unaffected. When the king told the baker to eat the bread, he flatly refused. The bread was then given to an animal, and it died. The king then ordered that the two be arrested, pending investigation.

They both saw dreams *"One of them (the one who served drinks) said, 'Indeed I see myself (in a dream) squeezing (grapes to make) wine.' The other (the baker) said, 'I see myself carrying bread upon my head, from which birds are eating."* Relating their dreams to Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, they asked him, *"Inform us of the interpretation. We truly deem you to be of the righteous."*

قَالَ لَا يَأْتِيكُمَا طَعَامٌ تُرْزَقَانِهِۦٓ إِلَّا نَبَّأْتُكُمَا بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦ قَبْلَ أَن يَأْتِيَكُمَا ذَٰلِكُمَا مِمَّا
عَلَّمَنِى رَبِّىٓ إِنِّى تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَهُم بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾
وَٱتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ ءَابَآءِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ مَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نُّشْرِكَ بِٱللَّهِ مِن شَىْءٍ
ذَٰلِكَ مِن فَضْلِ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾
يَٰصَٰحِبَىِ ٱلسِّجْنِ ءَأَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْوَٰحِدُ ٱلْقَهَّارُ ﴿٣٩﴾ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ

مِن دُونِهِۦٓ إِلَّآ أَسْمَآءً سَمَّيْتُمُوهَآ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُم مَّآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَٰنٍ ۚ إِنِ ٱلْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

(37) Yusuf عليه السلام replied, "I shall inform you of the interpretation before the food provided for you arrives. This is from the knowledge that my Lord has taught me. I have discarded the religion (D'īn) of those people who do not believe in Allāh and who reject the Hereafter." (38) "I have adopted the creed of my forefathers, Ibrahīm, Is'hāq and Ya'qūb. It does not befit us to ascribe any partners to Allāh. This is from the favours upon us and upon all people, but most people are ungrateful." (39) "O my two prison companions! Are numerous gods better or Allāh, Who is The One and The Almighty?" (40) "Besides Him, you worship only names that you and your forefathers have named without any revealed warrant from Allāh. Decisions rest only with Allāh. He has commanded that only He be worshipped. This is the right religion (D'īn), but most people know it not. "

BEFORE PROVIDING THE INTERPRETATION, SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام PREACHED ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* TO THE TWO

When the two prisoners requested for an interpretation of their dreams, *"Yusuf عليه السلام replied, 'I shall inform you of the interpretation before the food provided for you arrives."* However, he wished first to tell them of his responsibility as the Holy Prophet. Any preacher understands that he requires to seek the perfect opportunity for his message. No occasion can be more opportune than when the addressee requires something from the preacher. At such a moment, he is willing to accept almost anything.

Although he seemed to be addressing the two new convicts, his message was directed at all those in the prison. Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام began by introducing himself as one who has *"discarded the religion (D'īn) of those people who do not believe in Allāh and who reject the Hereafter."* He said, *'I have adopted the creed of my forefathers, Ibrahīm, Is'hāq and Ya'qūb."*

Outlining the foolishness of polytheism *(shirk)*, he said, *'it does not befit us to ascribe any partners to Allāh (Who created us and provides for us our every need)."* He meant to impress upon their minds that one would be foolish then to worship things that have been created by Allāh.

Continuing his preaching, he said that the blessing of the belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and the knowledge conferred to him *"is from the favours upon us and upon all people, but most people are ungrateful."*

To provoke their thoughts, he asked *"O my two prison companions! Are numerous gods better or Allāh, Who is The One and The Almighty?"* He asked them whether they preferred to rather worship various idols of gold, silver, brass and stone, who are unable to do any good or cause any harm, instead of worshipping One Almighty Allāh?

"Besides Him, you worship only names that you and your forefathers have named without any revealed warrant from Allāh." Besides being referred to as gods, these idols have no ability to perform any act worthy of their title. They are not even aware of the fact that they are being worshipped.

"Decisions rest only with Allāh." Only what Allāh says will be accorded any consideration. The idols will be considered obsolete if Allāh so dictates. *"He has commanded that only He be worshipped. This is the right religion (D'īn), but most people know it not."*

يَٰصَٰحِبَيِ ٱلسِّجۡنِ أَمَّآ أَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسۡقِي رَبَّهُۥ خَمۡرٗاۖ وَأَمَّا ٱلۡأٓخَرُ فَيُصۡلَبُ فَتَأۡكُلُ ٱلطَّيۡرُ مِن رَّأۡسِهِۦۚ قُضِيَ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ ٱلَّذِي فِيهِ تَسۡتَفۡتِيَانِ ﴿٤١﴾

(41) "O my two prison companions! As for one of you, he will serve wine to his master. As for the other, he will be crucified and birds will eat from his head. The decision has been passed regarding the matter you have inquired from me."

SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام INTERPRETS THE DREAMS FOR THEM

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام then provided the interpretation of their dreams. He said, *"O my two prison companions! As for one of you* (the one who used to serve drinks to the king), *he will serve wine to his master. As for the other, he will be crucified and birds will eat from his head."* He will be killed by crucifixion and his head will be devoured by birds of prey.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that when Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام interpreted the dreams for them, they said that they had not seen any dreams, claiming that they were merely jesting. Thereupon Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told them, *"The decision has been passed regarding the matter you have inquired from me."* [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 12 p.242*]

It is for this reason that Scholars *(Ulama)* warn that when a person has a false dream interpreted the dream will be realised according to the interpretation, and he will suffer punishment for his lie.

وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُۥ نَاجٖ مِّنۡهُمَا ٱذۡكُرۡنِي عِندَ رَبِّكَ فَأَنسَىٰهُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ ذِكۡرَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلَبِثَ فِي ٱلسِّجۡنِ بِضۡعَ سِنِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

(42) Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told the one whom he anticipated would be freed, "Mention me to your master." However, Devil (Shaytān) caused him to forget mentioning him to his master, and Yusuf عليه السلام remained in prison for a few years.

SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام TELLS THE LIBERATED CONVICT TO MENTION HIM TO THE KING, BUT HE REMAINS IN PRISON FOR A FEW MORE YEARS

From the two convicts *"Sayyidina Yusuf* عليه السلام *told the one whom he*

anticipated would be freed, 'Mention me to your master." He asked the person to mention to the king the entire episode of how he was imprisoned despite his innocence and that he was being made to suffer unnecessarily in prison.

He requested the person to do this because it was very possible that the king had no knowledge of the episode. If he were informed about it, he would learn that an innocent person had been imprisoned in his country. Although a believer *(Mu'min)* endures difficulties with patience and realises that he will be rewarded for it, there is no harm in attempting to alleviate oneself of the difficulty. It is for this reason that he told the person to inform the king of his condition.

"However, Devil *(Shaytān) caused him to forget mentioning him to his master, and Yusuf* عليه السلام *remained in prison for a few years."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" mentions that he remained there for seven or twelve years. The Arabic word "bidh'a" (*"few"*) refers to figures that lie between three and nine. And Allāh knows best.

وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ إِنِّىٓ أَرَىٰ سَبْعَ بَقَرَٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعَ
سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَٰتٍ ۖ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِى فِى رُءْيَٰىَ إِن كُنتُمْ لِلرُّءْيَا
تَعْبُرُونَ (43) قَالُوٓا۟ أَضْغَٰثُ أَحْلَٰمٍ ۖ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَأْوِيلِ ٱلْأَحْلَٰمِ بِعَٰلِمِينَ (44) وَقَالَ
ٱلَّذِى نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَٱدَّكَرَ بَعْدَ أُمَّةٍ أَنَا۠ أُنَبِّئُكُم بِتَأْوِيلِهِۦ فَأَرْسِلُونِ (45) يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا
ٱلصِّدِّيقُ أَفْتِنَا فِى سَبْعِ بَقَرَٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَسَبْعِ سُنۢبُلَٰتٍ
خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يَابِسَٰتٍ لَّعَلِّىٓ أَرْجِعُ إِلَى ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (46) قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ
سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا حَصَدتُّمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِى سُنۢبُلِهِۦٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ (47) ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ
ذَٰلِكَ سَبْعٌ شِدَادٌ يَأْكُلْنَ مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّمَّا تُحْصِنُونَ (48) ثُمَّ يَأْتِى مِنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ
عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ ٱلنَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ (49)

(43) The king said, "I see (in a dream) seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows and seven green ears of corn and others that are dry. O my counsellors! Furnish an interpretation for my dream if you are indeed able to interpret dreams." (44) They replied, "These are only confused dreams. We have no knowledge concerning the interpretation of confused dreams." (45) The released of the two convicts, recalling after a considerable period, said, "I shall inform you of the interpretation, so send me (to fetch an interpreter)." (46) "O Yusuf! O most truthful! Inform us regarding seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows and of corn and others save it green ears that are dry, so that I may return to the people that they be enlightened." (47) He replied, "You will farm for seven consecutive years. Leave whatever crops you harvest in their ears, except what you require for eating." (48) "Thereafter seven difficult years will follow that will consume all you would have stored for them except the little that you leave." (49) "Thereafter a year will follow in which abundant rains will fall for

the people and they will distil juices."

THE KING OF EGYPT SEES A DREAM AND SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام INTERPRET IT

As a pretext to release Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام from prison, Allāh showed a dream to the king of Egypt. Therein he saw *"seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows and seven green ears of corn and others that are dry."*

Recounting the dream to his ministers and advisors, the king told them. *"O my counsellors! Furnish an interpretation for my dream if you are indeed able to interpret dreams."* Unable to interpret the dream, they brushed it off as a meaningless jumble of thoughts. Therefore *"They replied, 'These are only confused dreams. We have no knowledge concerning the interpretation of confused dreams."*

Overhearing the discussion, the person who served drinks to the king recalled that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was able to correctly interpret dreams. He therefore requested permission from the people to approach Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام for the interpretation of the king's dream. This he did and returned to the king with the interpretation.

The interpretation of the dream was that people will harvest an abundance of crops for seven consecutive years, as represented by the seven fat cows and the seven green ears of corn. Thereafter, seven years of drought would follow, when all their reserved stores of grain would be depleted. This was indicated by the seven lean cows eating the seven fat ones, and by the dry ears of corn.

Together with the interpretation, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام also advised them concerning the measures they should take to prevent starvation. He told them that they should consume only what was necessary in the first seven years. He advised them that the rest of the crops should be preserved in their ears so that they are not eaten by vermin.

Thereafter he told them, *"Thereafter a year will follow in which abundant rains will fall for the people and* (because of the abundance of crops) *they will distil juices* (from the various fruits)." The extraction of juices refers to the distilling of wine as well as the extraction of oil from various crops like olives and sesame seeds.

وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱئْتُونِى بِهِۦ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُ ٱلرَّسُولُ قَالَ ٱرْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَسْـَٔلْهُ مَا بَالُ ٱلنِّسْوَةِ
ٱلَّٰتِى قَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى بِكَيْدِهِنَّ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُنَّ إِذْ رَٰوَدتُّنَّ يُوسُفَ عَن
نَّفْسِهِۦ ۚ قُلْنَ حَٰشَ لِلَّهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا عَلَيْهِ مِن سُوٓءٍ ۚ قَالَتِ ٱمْرَأَتُ ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلْـَٰٔنَ حَصْحَصَ
ٱلْحَقُّ أَنَا۠ رَٰوَدتُّهُۥ عَن نَّفْسِهِۦ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ ﴿٥١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ أَنِّى لَمْ أَخُنْهُ بِٱلْغَيْبِ
وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى كَيْدَ ٱلْخَآئِنِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

(50) The king said, "Bring him to me." When the messenger came to Yusuf عليه السلام, he told him, "Return to your master and ask him what is the condition of

the women who cut their hands. Indeed my Lord is well aware of their plot." (51) The king asked, "What is your tale when you attempted to seduce Yusuf to appease your motives?" They replied, "Allāh is Pure! We do not know of any evil in him." The wife of the minister said, "The truth is now out. I attempted to seduce him to realise my motives and he is of the truthful." (52) "This was so that he may know that I did not betray him in his absence, and, without doubt, Allāh does not promote the plot of betrayers."

THE KING SENDS FOR SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام, BUT HE REFUSES TO BE RELEASED UNTIL HIS MATTER IS INVESTIGATED

When the king heard of the interpretation and the advice, he realised that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was definitely a learned person and he desired to meet him. He therefore sent a messenger to fetch him from the prison. However, when the messenger arrived at the prison, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام refused to accompany him to the king until the king summoned the women who caused him to be imprisoned and learnt the truth from them.

Certain commentators have mentioned that the other women were also summoned because they used to encourage Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to comply with the bidding of the minister's wife. Other commentators maintain that they also tried to seduce him for themselves. Whatever the case, they were all summoned by the king. [*"Ruhul Ma'i" v. 12 p.335*]

When the king asked them to disclose the truth of the matter, they admitted that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was innocent. By declaring, *"Allāh is Pure!"* they meant to say that if they lied about Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, it would mean that Allāh's knowledge of the incident was incorrect, since Allāh knew that he was innocent. Allāh is Pure from inaccurate knowledge.

They admitted that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was *'from the truthful"* when he made the statement to the minister, *"It was she who tried to seduce me to attain her motives."*

When Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام learnt that he had been exonerated in the king's court, he said that he prompted the investigation so that the minister *"may know that I did not betray him in his absence, and, without doubt, Allāh does not promote the plot of betrayers."*

NOTE: There are two important points of wisdom behind the fact that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام did not come out of jail before his name was cleared. The first was that his purpose as a Prophet entailed propagation and preaching. It is obvious that none would have been influenced by the preaching of someone who has a stigma attached to his name. People would then scorn his teachings, thinking him to be unfaithful to the same teachings.

Every person should make an attempt to always clear his name of any suspicion, especially people who are known to be pious or holding some position in society. People are incorrect to merely brush off any suspicion on themselves by saying that the slanderers will be punished for their slander. They should

make a concerted effort to clear their names so that the stigma does not taint their reputation. If they do not do this they will be casting people into further sin by giving them a greater opportunity to backbite. In addition, they will be unable to preach to people.

The second wisdom was that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام knew from the time that he saw the dream as a child that Allāh would be granting him a position of authority. It was therefore necessary that he remove all doubts about his reputation so that he could do justice to the post. In this way he could serve the people without them harbouring doubts against him.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If I had remained in jail as long as Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام did, I would have immediately responded to the messenger." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.47 8*]

Commentators have mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned this out of humility, but would have done the same as Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام did. Others mention that even though the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would have immediately responded to the bidding of the messenger, this shows the virtue of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام in this single regard. Otherwise, on a general basis, this hadith does not grant Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام superiority over the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Shah Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would have left the prison immediately because of his excessive desire to continue the responsibility of propagation.

PART THIRTEEN

۞ وَمَآ أُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِيٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلنَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌۢ بِٱلسُّوٓءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيٓ ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّى غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (53) وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱئْتُونِى بِهِۦٓ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِى ۖ فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُۥ قَالَ إِنَّكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ (54) قَالَ ٱجْعَلْنِى عَلَىٰ خَزَآئِنِ ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ إِنِّى حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ (55) وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَآءُ ۚ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَن نَّشَآءُ ۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (56) وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ يَتَّقُونَ (57)

(53) "I do not exonerate myself. Surely the soul insistently orders evil, except on whom Allāh showers mercy. Undoubtedly my Lord is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." (54) The king said, "Bring him to me so that I may keep him exclusively for myself" When he spoke to him, he said, "Verily today you are a man of honour and trustworthiness with us." (55) Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said, "Appoint me over the treasures of the land. Indeed I am protective and knowledgeable." (56) In this manner, We granted authority to Yusuf in the land. He could live wherever he willed. We shower Our mercy upon whomsoever We wish, and We do no put to waste the reward of those who do good. (57) Undoubtedly, the reward of the Hereafter is best for those who believe and adopt piety (taqwa).

THE KING AGAIN CALLS FOR SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام AND MAKES HIM THE MINISTER OF THE TREASURY

After Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was absolved of blame, he mentioned, *"I do not exonerate myself Surely the soul insistently orders evil..."* This is what the soul of man will always advocate. The only exceptional people who will not succumb to the guiles of the soul are those upon *"whom Allāh showers mercy. Undoubtedly my Lord is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

He mentioned this because it is not proper that a person praises himself. Allāh says in Surah Najm, *"So do not ascribe purity to yourselves* (i.e. Do not proclaim your own piety). *He* (Allāh) *knows best who is the most pious."* [*Surah 53, verse 32*]

After the matter was resolved with the women, the king again sent for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Being impressed by his intelligence, his piety and the fact that he took the pains to first exonerate himself, the king said, *"Bring him to me so that I may keep him exclusively for myself"* The king intended to appoint Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام as one of his counsellors and close advisors.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام then met the king. When the two had a discussion, the king who was even more impressed with Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said, *"Verily today you are a man of honour and trustworthiness with us."*

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام informed the king that the drought will also affect the neighbouring districts and that Egypt should assist those who came for provisions. He added that they could be asked to pay a nominal amount so that it could bolster the state treasury, while also assisting the other people.

The question then arose about who would administer the financial affairs of the state during this period. In reply to this, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said, *"Appoint me over the treasures of the land. Indeed I am protective and knowledgeable."* He added these two attributes because they are what is required from people in control of financial matters. They need to be protective and trustworthy so that they do not misappropriate the wealth. In addition to this they need to possess the relevant knowledge so that they do not squander the wealth and are able to keep proper records of profits and expenses.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was thus appointed to the position. Allāh says, *'in this manner, We granted authority to Yusuf in the land (of Egypt). He could live wherever he willed. We shower Our mercy upon whomsoever We wish..."* None can prevent Allāh from elevating anyone to the highest of ranks even from the most humble of beginnings. As for these people of virtue, Allāh says, *"and We do no put to waste the reward of those who do good."*

"Undoubtedly, the reward of the Hereafter is best for those who believe and adopt piety (taqwa)." Although the good people will be amply rewarded in this world, their rewards in the Hereafter will be much better.

Although Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was appointed to manage the finances of the country, commentators mention that the king also handed over other administrative matters to him. So much authority was vested in him that he was practically in control of the entire country.

Sayyidina Abdur Rahmān bin Samurah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not ask to be appointed as a leader, because if you are appointed because of your request, then it will be given to you (and Allāh will not assist you in the least). However, if it is given to you without asking, then you will be assisted in the task." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By Allāh! I will never appoint any person to a post who asks for it, nor anyone who desires it." [*Bukhari*]

In view of these Ahadīth, the question arises as to how could Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام ask for the position? Scholars *(Ulama)* explain that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام knew that during the seven years of drought, people would be desperate

to assist only themselves. Since the king himself was a disbeliever *(kāfir)* and had only disbelievers *(kuffār)* as his ministers, one of them would be appointed to the post. If this were done, no mercy could be expected to be shown to the destitute.

Therefore, in the best interests of the public, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام offered to accept the post. He was best qualified for the position, especially since he was the noble Prophet عليه السلام of Allāh as well. In circumstances where the fear exists that others would abuse the authority vested in them, it will be compulsory that a person who is capable offers himself for the post.

It was merely for the reassurance of the king that he added, *'Indeed I am protective and knowledgeable."* Appointment to the position would also prove to be conducive to his duty of propagation since people are inclined to following people in authority.

Another question is raised at this juncture. The question is that how could Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام accept a post in a infidel's *(kāfir)* country, where the laws are all based on disbelief *(kufr)*? Would he then also be required to enforce the laws of disbelief *(kufr)*? The reply is that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was granted the authority to administer the finances of the country and was given absolute liberty to do as he pleased. In this way he was not constrained to abide by the oppressive laws of the country.

وَجَآءَ إِخۡوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُواْ عَلَيۡهِ فَعَرَفَهُمۡ وَهُمۡ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ﴿58﴾ وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم
بِجَهَازِهِمۡ قَالَ ٱئۡتُونِي بِأَخٖ لَّكُم مِّنۡ أَبِيكُمۡۚ أَلَا تَرَوۡنَ أَنِّيٓ أُوفِي ٱلۡكَيۡلَ وَأَنَا۠ خَيۡرُ ٱلۡمُنزِلِينَ
﴿59﴾ فَإِن لَّمۡ تَأۡتُونِي بِهِۦ فَلَا كَيۡلَ لَكُمۡ عِندِي وَلَا تَقۡرَبُونِ ﴿60﴾ قَالُواْ سَنُرَٰوِدُ عَنۡهُ
أَبَاهُ وَإِنَّا لَفَٰعِلُونَ ﴿61﴾ وَقَالَ لِفِتۡيَٰنِهِ ٱجۡعَلُواْ بِضَٰعَتَهُمۡ فِي رِحَالِهِمۡ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَعۡرِفُونَهَآ إِذَا
ٱنقَلَبُوٓاْ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهِمۡ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُونَ ﴿62﴾ فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِيهِمۡ قَالُواْ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مُنِعَ
مِنَّا ٱلۡكَيۡلُ فَأَرۡسِلۡ مَعَنَآ أَخَانَا نَكۡتَلۡ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَٰفِظُونَ ﴿63﴾ قَالَ هَلۡ
ءَامَنُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ إِلَّا كَمَآ أَمِنتُكُمۡ عَلَىٰٓ أَخِيهِ مِن قَبۡلُ فَٱللَّهُ خَيۡرٌ حَٰفِظٗاۖ وَهُوَ
أَرۡحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿64﴾

(58) Yusuf's brothers came and entered into his presence. He recognised them, but they did not recognise him. (59) When he prepared their provisions he said, "Bring your brother to me from your father. Do you not see that I grant measure in full and that I am the best of hosts?" (60) "If you do not bring him to me you will have no measure from me, nor shall you draw close." (61) They said, "We shall request his father regarding him, and we will really do so." (62) Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said to his attendants, "Place their funds back into their carriages so that they recognise it when they return to their families, and so that they may return." (63) When they returned to their father they said, "O our father! A measure shall be denied to us, so send our brother with us so that we may bring

grains. We shall certainly guard him well." (64) He said, "Should I trust you with him as I trusted you with his brother before? But Allāh is the best Protector and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."

YUSUF'S عليه السلام BROTHERS ARRIVE IN EGYPT FOR GRAINS. HE TELLS THEM THAT THEY SHOULD BRING THEIR STEP-BROTHER AS WELL AND HE RETURNS THEIR MONEY

When the seven years of drought struck, it affected the countries neighbouring Egypt as well. The father of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and his brothers were also affected in Palestine. When the brothers heard that Egypt had provisions, they arrived there to seek grains.

They were directed to Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to pay the price and have the grains given to them. When they arrived in his presence, he immediately recognised them. They, however did not realise who he was. It never crossed their minds that this could be the same child whom they abandoned in a forest of Kan'ān and then had him sold as a slave.

According to some commentators, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام got someone to find out about Bin Yāmīn, whom they left at home. Others say that when Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام had all the camels loaded, they requested that another also be loaded for their eleventh brother. They explained that their father did not permit him to accompany them because his other brother had been lost.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told them that it was against their law to provide for someone who was not himself present. However, he gave them the extra load. He then told them, (for the next time they came), *"Bring year brother to me from your father. Do you not see that I grant measure in full and that I am the best of hosts? If you do not bring him to me you will have no measure from me, nor shall you draw close."*

They understood that they would have to return for more provisions, so they promised, *"We shall request his father regarding him, and we will really do so."*

"Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said to his attendants, 'Place their funds (the price which they paid for the grains) back into their carriages (without them knowing) so that they recognise it when they return to their families, and so that they may return." He knew that once they realised his generosity, they would soon return.

Certain Scholars *(Ulama)* have stated that he returned their money to them because he feared that it was all the wealth they possessed. If it were not returned to them, the chances were that they would never return for more.

Others have mentioned that the wisdom behind returning the money was that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام would think that the money was returned by mistake, and that it should be returned to the Egyptian treasury. Thinking this he would definitely send his sons back with the money, and Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would be able to meet his real brother.

The objection arises that it seems incorrect of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to return the money to his brothers when the king had instructed that everyone pay the price. Some Scholars *(Ulama)* say that it was possible that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام paid the price himself. Others say that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام knew that

his father would return the money at a later stage. The transaction was, therefore, a form of credit. Whatever the reason, it should be well understood that the Prophets عليهم السلام were incapable of sinning and Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would have never cheated.

"When they returned to their father they said, 'O our father! A measure shall be denied to us (if we return without Bin Yāmīn in future), *so send our brother with us so that we may bring grains.* (You need not worry) *We shall certainly guard him well.*

SayyidinaYa'qūb عليه السلام said, *"Should I trust you with him as I trusted you with his brother before? But Allāh is the best Protector and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."* He was adamant not to accede to their request.

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوا مَتَاعَهُمْ وَجَدُوا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِي ۖ هَٰذِهِ
بِضَاعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ إِلَيْنَا ۖ وَنَمِيرُ أَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ أَخَانَا وَنَزْدَادُ كَيْلَ بَعِيرٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ كَيْلٌ
يَسِيرٌ ﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ لَنْ أُرْسِلَهُ مَعَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تُؤْتُونِ مَوْثِقًا مِنَ اللَّهِ لَتَأْتُنَّنِي بِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ
يُحَاطَ بِكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا آتَوْهُ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

(65) When they opened their provisions and found their funds returned to them, they said, 'O our father! What more can we want? Here are our funds returned to us. We shall bring for our family, protect our brother and have an extra camel load. These grains are inadequate." (66) He said, "I shall never send him with you until you give me a solemn oath from Allāh that you will definitely return him to me unless you are surrounded." When they gave him the oath he said, "Allāh is Vigilant over what we say."

THE BROTHERS FIND THE RETURNED MONEY AND REQUEST THEIR FATHER TO RETURN; PROMISING TO PROTECT THEIR YOUNG BROTHER

While the brothers were negotiating with their father about taking Bin Yāmīn with them on their next trip, they began to unpack their provisions. When they found that their money had been returned to them, they exclaimed, *"O our father! What more can we want? Here are our funds returned to us. (We have to return to such a generous person, so send our brother with us so that we receive the full share of grains.).We shall bring for our family, protect our brother and have an extra camel load."*

"These grains are inadequate." Soon the grains will be depleted and we will have to return for more.

Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام said, *"I shall never send him with you until you give me a solemn oath from Allāh that you will definitely return him to me unless you are surrounded.* "By adding the clause at the end, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام meant to say that they should make every effort to protect their brother. The only time when they would be absolved of this responsibility is when such circumstances prevail that are beyond their control.

Initially he never wanted to send Bin Yāmīn, for he told them, *"Should I trust you with him as I trusted you with his brother before?"* However, he did realise that in the end it will be Allāh Who will safeguard him and not the brothers, even though they promise to do so. It was for this reason that he added, *"But Allāh is the best Protector and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."*

Afterwards he still realised this, but took the oath from them because a person needs to adopt all the apparent means as well, together with relying on Allāh. Therefore, *"When they gave him the oath he said, 'Allāh is Vigilant over what we say.*

وَقَالَ يَٰبَنِيَّ لَا تَدۡخُلُواْ مِنۢ بَابٖ وَٰحِدٖ وَٱدۡخُلُواْ مِنۡ أَبۡوَٰبٖ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٖۖ وَمَآ أُغۡنِي عَنكُم
مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍۖ إِنِ ٱلۡحُكۡمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِۖ عَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلۡتُۖ وَعَلَيۡهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلُونَ
﴿٦٧﴾ وَلَمَّا دَخَلُواْ مِنۡ حَيۡثُ أَمَرَهُمۡ أَبُوهُم مَّا كَانَ يُغۡنِي عَنۡهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٍ
إِلَّا حَاجَةٗ فِي نَفۡسِ يَعۡقُوبَ قَضَىٰهَاۚ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَذُو عِلۡمٖ لِّمَا عَلَّمۡنَٰهُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكۡثَرَ
ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

(67) Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام said, "O my sons! Do not enter through one door, but enter from different doors. I cannot be of any avail to you against Allāh's order. Decisions rest with Allāh. Only on Him do I rely, and all those who pin their reliance should rely only on Him." (68)When they entered as their father had instructed them, it could not be of any avail to them against Allāh's order, except a need in the heart of Ya'qūb that he fulfilled. Indeed he was knowledgeable of that which We taught him, but most people do not know.

SAYYIDINA YA'QŪB عليه السلام TELS HIS SONS TO ENTER THROUGH DIFFERENT DOORS, ADDING THAT HE STILL RELIED ON ALLĀH DESPITE THIS INSTRUCTION

When the brothers prepared to leave with Bin Yāmīn, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام advised them saying, *"O my sons! Do not enter through one door, but enter from different doors."* Commentators mention that he issued this instruction to avert anyone casting the 'evil eye' on them, since they were all handsome men. The effects of the 'evil eye' are a reality (as mentioned in the Ahadīth), so Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام feared this from affecting his sons since eleven handsome men entering through one gate are sure to attract attention.

Together with the instruction, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام told them, *"I cannot be of any avail to you against Allāh's order."* By saying this, he meant to impress upon their minds that the instruction was merely a means to avert evil befalling them. However, the decree of Allāh will still predominate. If Allāh still willed any evil to befall them, no plan and power could prevent it.

He added, *"Decisions rest with Allāh. Only on Him do I rely, and all those who pin their reliance should rely only on Him."*

"When they entered as their father had instructed them, it (i.e. his instruction) could not be of any avail to them against Allāh's order, except (that he instructed them only because of) a need the heart of Ya'qūb that he fulfilled." Although he knew that Allāh's decree will predominate, he issued the instruction because he felt the need for them to be protected.

Regarding Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"Indeed he was knowledgeable of that which We taught him..."* He realised that the decree of Allāh will always predominate over everything. *"....but most people do not know."* Most people still think that their plans will prove beneficial to them over that which Allāh has ordained.

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ ءَاوَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ قَالَ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُم بِجَهَازِهِمْ جَعَلَ ٱلسِّقَايَةَ فِى رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ
أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيَّتُهَا ٱلْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَٰرِقُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾ قَالُوا وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَيْهِم مَّاذَا تَفْقِدُونَ
﴿٧١﴾ قَالُوا نَفْقِدُ صُوَاعَ ٱلْمَلِكِ وَلِمَن جَآءَ بِهِۦ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا بِهِۦ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٧٢﴾
قَالُوا تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُم مَّا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا سَٰرِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ قَالُوا فَمَا
جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥٓ إِن كُنتُمْ كَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾ قَالُوا جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥ مَن وُجِدَ فِى رَحْلِهِۦ فَهُوَ جَزَٰٓؤُهُۥ
كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

(69) When they entered the presence of Yusuf, he took his brother unto himself saying, "I am indeed your brother, so do not grieve about what they do." (70) When he prepared their provisions for them, he placed a drinking cup in his brother's carriage. Thereafter an announcer announced, "Where to O caravan! Verily you are thieves!" (71) Advancing towards them, they said, "What have you lost?" (72) They replied, "We have lost the drinking cup of the king. There shall be camel's load for whoever brings it forth, and I stand guarantee for this." (73) They said, "By Allāh! You are well aware of the fact that we have not come to cause corruption in the land, nor are we thieves." (74) They said, "What will be the penalty for it if you are lying?" (75) They replied, "The penalty is this, that the very person in whose carriage it is found will be the penalty for it. This is how we penalise oppressors."

THE BROTHERS ARRIVE IN EGYPT AND SAYYIDINA YUSUF'S عليه السلام PLAN TO KEEP HIS REAL BROTHER BACK

The brothers finally presented their step-brother to Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Commentators mention that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام hosted two brothers in a room. Since they were eleven, and Bin Yāmīn was the odd one out, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told them that he would keep Bin Yāmīn with him. When they were alone, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told him, *"I am indeed your brother, so do not grieve about what they do."*

In a plan to keep his brother behind with him, when Sayyidina Yūsuf عليه السلام *"prepared their provisions for them, he placed a drinking cup in his brother's carriage."* This was the cup that was used to measure the quantity of grains distributed. When the attendants of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام found this missing, they were perplexed, since they did not know what Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام had done.

"Thereafter an announcer announced (to the brothers), *'Whereto O caravan! Verily you are thieves!"*

Astonished at the accusation, the brothers asked, *"What have you lost? They replied, 'We have lost the drinking cup of the king. (As a reward) There shall be camel's load for whoever brings it forth..."* So that none could doubt the reward, the announcer added, *"and I stand guarantee for it."*

The brothers said, *"By Allāh! You are well aware of the fact that we have not come to cause corruption in the land, nor are we thieves."*

The attendants of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام then asked them if, after investigation, it was proven that one of them did steal the cup, *"What will be the penalty for it if you are lying* (about your innocence)?"

The brothers replied, *"The penalty is this,.. that the very person in whose carriage it is found will be the penalty for it."* i.e. The thief will be restrained and kept as a slave. They added, *"This is how we penalise oppressors."* In the Shari'ah that they followed, this was the penalty for stealing.

فَبَدَأَ بِأَوْعِيَتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ اسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِن وِعَاءِ أَخِيهِ كَذَٰلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينِ الْمَلِكِ إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّن نَّشَاءُ وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

(76) Yusuf عليه السلام began (looking at) their satchels before the satchel of his brother and then removed the cup from his brother's satchel. Thus did We inspire a plan for Yusuf. He could not have kept back his brother according to the law of the king, except of Allāh willed. We elevate the ranks of whomsoever We will. Above every knowledgeable person is one who is more knowledgeable.

THE CUP IS FOUND IN BIN YĀMĪN'S SATCHEL AND YUSUF عليه السلام IS ABLE TO USE THIS AS AN EXCUSE TO DETAIN HIM

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام began searching the satchel's of the other brothers. If he had begun with that of Bin Yāmīn, they may have suspected his plan instantly. Eventually, he extracted the measuring cup from Bin Yāmīn's satchel and found the excuse to restrain him. Allāh says, *"Thus did We inspire a plan for Yusuf He could not have kept back his brother according to the law of the king, except if Allāh willed."* The laws of Egypt did not allow for a thief to be restrained as a slave, so Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام could not implement those laws in this case.

Allāh inspired Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to adopt this plan. Allāh says, *"We*

elevate the ranks of whomsoever We will. Above every knowledgeable person is one who is more knowledgeable." No matter how knowledgeable a person may be, there is always someone with even more knowledge. Above even the most knowledge person, there is always Allāh. None can even draw close to His knowledge.

Another objection is raised. The objection is that why did Sayyidina Yusufعليه السلام, by retaining Bin Yāmīn, cause additional difficulty to his father, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام? Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام had already been pining over the loss of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام for so many years, now the loss of Bin Yāmīn would distress him even further.

The reply is that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام retained Bin Yāmīn because he felt confident that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام would then send the brothers on a mission to find both lost brothers. In so doing, they would again return to him. If he sent them to search for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام only, the chances were that they would refuse because they thought him to be dead. If Bin Yāmīn was also retained, they would, at least, attempt to bring him back.

Some people have raised a further objection that it was not proper that Bin Yāmīn be made a slave. This objection holds no weight because he was never made a slave. He was merely detained on this pretext. In addition to this, the Shari'ah that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام followed allowed the enslavement of thieves.

Yet another question is raised. How could Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام accuse the innocent brothers of theft merely to fulfil his personal desires? The reply is that he never accused them. His attendants made the accusation.

However, the question may still be asked that Bin Yāmīn was still accused of something that he never did, causing him to be humiliated. Scholars *(Ulama)* have replied to this by saying that Bin Yāmīn had consented to this plan because he was greatly harassed by his brothers. Therefore, he preferred living with Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام despite the accusation, rather than returning with his brothers.

It may also be said that this accusation was such that it was soon to be dispelled when the brothers learnt the truth. Therefore, it was not a very serious matter. And Allāh knows best.

۞ قَالُوٓا۟ إِن يَسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لَّهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ فَأَسَرَّهَا يُوسُفُ فِى نَفْسِهِۦ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ أَنتُمْ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا ۖ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَهُۥٓ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُۥٓ ۖ إِنَّا نَرَىٰكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ قَالَ مَعَاذَ ٱللَّهِ أَن نَّأْخُذَ إِلَّا مَن وَجَدْنَا مَتَٰعَنَا عِندَهُۥٓ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

(77) The brothers said, "If he has stolen then surely his brother before him must have also stolen." Yusuf concealed this matter in his heart and did not disclose it

to them. He said, "You are worse off Allāh knows best what you speak." (78) They submitted, "O minister! He has an extremely aged father, so take one of us in his place. Verily we deem you to be of the kind ones." (79) He said, "Allāh forbid that we take anyone besides the one with whom we found our article. If we do so, then we would certainly be of the oppressors."

THE BROTHERS REQUEST THAT ONE OF THEM BE ARRESTED INSTEAD OF BIN YĀMĪN

In anger and because of being disgraced, the brothers said, *"If he has stolen then surely his brother before him* [Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام] *must have also stolen."*

Although this was an insult to his reputation, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام never replied to them. In his heart, *"He said, 'You are worse off* "'They perpetrated the much more serious crime of abducting a child from his father and selling him as a slave. However, he said, *'Allāh knows best what you speak."*

Based on narrations from the Bani Isra'īl, commentators quote five incidents that mention what the brothers referred to when they accused Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام of theft. One of these is that he used to steal food from the table to feed the poor. However, one cannot rely on these narrations since they are not verified.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned (*v. 9 p.339*) that in all probability, there was no incident that they referred to. They were merely lying.

The brothers were now extremely worried as to how they were to answer their father. In an attempt to get Bin Yāmīn back, *"They submitted, 'O minister! He has an extremely aged father* (who would be devastated upon hearing the news), *so take one of us in his place. (Please accede to our request for) Verily we deem you to be of the kind ones.*

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام replied that it was impossible to arrest an innocent person. *"He said, 'Allāh forbid that we take anyone besides the one with whom we found our article. If we do so then we certainly be of the oppressors."'*

فَلَمَّا ٱسْتَيْـَٔسُوا۟ مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا۟ نَجِيًّا ۖ قَالَ كَبِيرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُم مَّوْثِقًا مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمِن قَبْلُ مَا فَرَّطتُمْ فِى يُوسُفَ ۖ فَلَنْ أَبْرَحَ ٱلْأَرْضَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْذَنَ لِىٓ أَبِىٓ أَوْ يَحْكُمَ ٱللَّهُ لِى ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ ٱرْجِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِيكُمْ فَقُولُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّ ٱبْنَكَ سَرَقَ وَمَا شَهِدْنَآ إِلَّا بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَسْـَٔلِ ٱلْقَرْيَةَ ٱلَّتِى كُنَّا فِيهَا وَٱلْعِيرَ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَا ۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَٰدِقُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(80) When they grew despondent of (convincing) Yusuf عليه السلام, they stood aside to consult. The eldest of them said, "Do you not know that your father had

taken from you a solemn oath from Allāh, and before you had erred with regard to Yusuf? Now I shall never leave this land until my father permits me or Allāh decides my matter. He is the best of deciders." (81) "Return to your father and say, 'O our father! Indeed your son has stolen. We are only testifying to what we know, and we have no knowledge of the unseen."' (82) "'You may ask the (inhabitants of the) town in which we were and the caravan whom we accompanied back. We are really truthful."'

THE BROTHERS CONVENE AND THE ELDEST REFUSES TO RETURN WITH THEM, TELLING THEM TO INFORM THEIR FATHER OF THE OCCURRENCE

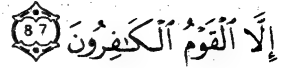
The brothers finally realised that they could not convince Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to accept any of them in place of Bin Yāmīn. They then gathered together to decide their plans. *"The eldest of them* (whose name was either Yahūda, Sham'ūn or Rūbīl) *said, 'Do you not know that your father had taken from you a solemn oath from Allāh, and before you had erred with regard to Yusuf?"'* He was concerned that now they would have no face to show their father because they will be causing him double the grief.

He told them, *"Now I shall never leave this land until my father* (after learning of the situation) *permits me or Allāh decides my matter (by may be returning the two brothers). He is the best of deciders."*

He advised them by saying, *"Return to your father and say, 'O our father! Indeed your son has stolen* (because of which he has been retained in Egypt". *We are only testifying to what we know* (because we saw the cup in his satchel), *and we have no knowledge of the unseen."* By saying this he referred to the fact that they had no knowledge of the fact that this incident would arise at the time of taking the oath.

In this way he impressed upon their minds that they were now in an impossible situation and the clause made in their oath applied viz, that they would return him *"unless you are surrounded."*

He advised them further that since their father would be reluctant to believe them, they should add, *"You may ask the (inhabitants of the) town in which we were and the caravan whom we accompanied back. We are really truthful."*

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۖ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ
جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨٣﴾ وَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا أَسَفَىٰ عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ
وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٨٤﴾ قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ تَفْتَأُ تَذْكُرُ
يُوسُفَ حَتَّىٰ تَكُونَ حَرَضًا أَوْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْهَالِكِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَشْكُو
بَثِّي وَحُزْنِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ يَا بَنِيَّ اذْهَبُوا
فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِن يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَيْأَسُوا مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِن رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ

(83) Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام said, "But your souls have contrived this matter for you. However, I will exercise patience without any complaint. Perchance Allāh will bring them all to me. Without doubt, He is the All Knowing, The Wise." (84) He turned away from them and said, "O my grief for Yusuf."' His eyes turned white with sorrow and he was suppressing it all the time. (85) His sons said, "By Allāh! You keep mentioning Yusuf until you waste away or become totally destroyed." (86) He replied, "I complain of my sorrow and my grief only to Allāh. And I have been granted such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know about." (87) "O my sons! Go and search for Yusuf and his brother. And do not become despondent of Allāh's mercy. Indeed only the disbelieving nation grows despondent of Allāh's mercy."

THEIR FATHER DOES NOT BELIEVE THE BROTHERS WHEN THEY INFORM HIM ABOUT THE INCIDENT AND HE THEN INSTRUCTS THEM TO SEARCH FOR YUSUF عليه السلام

Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام did not believe the brothers when they related the entire incident of Bin Yāmīn to him. He repeated the same words that he used when they reported the death of SayyidinaYusuf عليه السلام to him. He told them, *"But your souls have contrived this matter for you. However, I will exercise patience without any complaint.* "Although this time the brothers were truthful, a person does lose confidence in those who have lied to him before.

He added, *"Perchance Allāh will bring them all* (Yusuf عليه السلام, Bin Yāmīn and the eldest son) *to me. Without doubt, He is the All Knowing, The Wise."* He understood that Allāh caused everything to happen for good reason.

"He turned away from them and said, 'O my grief for Yusuf"'

Over the years, he cried so much that *"His eyes turned white with sorrow and he was suppressing it all the time."*

"His sons said, 'By Allāh! You keep mentioning Yusuf until you waste away or become totally destroyed."' He did not pay heed to what they said because they could not understand his feelings. Therefore, he told them, *"I complain of my sorrow and my grief only to Allāh. And I have been granted such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know about."* He was sure that he would meet his lost children one day.

Then he instructed them saying, *"O my sons! Go and search for Yusuf and his brother. And do not become despondent of Allāh's mercy. Indeed only the disbelieving nation grows despondent of Allāh's mercy."*

Scholars *(Ulama)* have mentioned several explanations of the statement of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام when he said, *"I have been granted such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know about."* Some say that this meant that he was certain that the dream of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام would be realised, and that all of them were to prostrate to him soon. Others say that he may have received revelation from Allāh informing him that he was soon to meet them.

Based on this knowledge, he commanded them to search for Sayyidina

Yusuf عليه السلام and his brother. He told them never to lose hope of finding them because Allāh would certainly join them again.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ قَالُوا يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْعَزِيزُ مَسَّنَا وَأَهْلَنَا ٱلضُّرُّ وَجِئْنَا بِبِضَٰعَةٍ مُّزْجَىٰةٍ
فَأَوْفِ لَنَا ٱلْكَيْلَ وَتَصَدَّقْ عَلَيْنَآ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَجْزِى ٱلْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ (88) قَالَ هَلْ عَلِمْتُم
مَّا فَعَلْتُم بِيُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ إِذْ أَنتُمْ جَٰهِلُونَ (89) قَالُوٓا أَءِنَّكَ لَأَنتَ يُوسُفُ قَالَ
أَنَا۠ يُوسُفُ وَهَٰذَآ أَخِى قَدْ مَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَآ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا
يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ (90) قَالُوا تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ ءَاثَرَكَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِن كُنَّا
لَخَٰطِـِٔينَ (91) قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ
ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ (92)

(88) When they entered into the presence of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام they said, "O minister! Calamity has befallen us and our family. We have come with a sum that is worthy of being returned, so grant us the full measure and be charitable towards us. Indeed Allāh rewards the charitable ones." (89) He said, "Do you know what you did to Yusuf and his brother when you were ignorant?" (90) They exclaimed, "Are you really Yusuf!" He replied, "I am Yusuf and this is my brother. Allāh has indeed favoured us. The fact is that whoever adopts piety (taqwa) and is patient, then Allāh surely does not put to waste the reward of those who do good." (91) They said, "By Allāh! Allāh has certainly preferred you above us and we were really among the wrong doers. (92) He said, "There shall be no reproach on you today. May Allāh forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."

THE BROTHERS ARRIVE IN EGYPT A THIRD TIME FOR GRAINS AND SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام DISCLOSES HIS IDENTITY TO THEM

Acting upon the instruction of their father, the brothers set out for Egypt, for they at least knew that Bin Yāmīn and the eldest brother were there. They also required to collect some more grains. They did not have the required amount of money to pay.for the full measure of grains and requested Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to be lenient with them. According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه they only had a few defective Dirhams that were not worth their complete value.

"... be charitable towards us..." Explaining this, certain commentators have mentioned that this was a request for Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to accept the sum of money that they possessed despite its defective nature. Other commentators mention that this was a request for additional money, while others say that they meant to request for Bin Yāmīn in addition to the grains. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that in this case the translation would be, *"be kind towards us."*

"Indeed Allāh rewards the charitable ones." This sentence supports the first explanation.

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام asked them, *"Do you know what you did to Yusuf and his brother when you were ignorant?"* Explaining the link between the question of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and the request for grain from the brothers, commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام meant to draw their attention to the following fact. He meant to tell them that the calamity of the drought that they claimed had befallen them was something recent. It was also not so serious that nothing could be done about it. However, what they did by abducting Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and causing grief to Bin Yāmīn was even greater. The sorrow that they caused to their father was far worse and prolonged compared to what they considered a calamity.

The brothers were surprised by this question for they could not understand how the minister of Egypt could be aware of the entire episode. The mode of questioning, however, aroused their suspicions that this could be Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام himself. Therefore, they exclaimed, *"Are you really Yusuf!"*

"He replied, 'I am Yusuf and this is my brother. Allāh has indeed favoured us. - It is the sterling quality of a believer *(Mu'min)* that he rather speaks of Allāh's favours upon himself instead of the difficulties. He is grateful to Allāh and expects more good from Him. Allāh says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"When your Lord announced, 'If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more..."* *[Surah 14, verse 7]*

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام continued to say, *"The fact is that whoever adopts piety (taqwa) and is patient, then Allāh surely does not put to waste the reward of those who do good."* He mentioned this sentence as a rule for them to remember and did not say that he adopted piety *(taqwa)* and patience, because of which Allāh favoured him. He also did not tell his brothers that they were not patient and not adherents of piety *(taqwa)*.

Piety *(taqwa)* benefits a person greatly in the Hereafter. In this world it serves to alleviate one's difficulties as well. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Undoubtedly Allāh is with those who adopt piety (taqwa) and those who adopt the path of good."* [*Surah 16, verse 128*]

Allāh says in Surah Talāq, *"For him who adopts piety (taqwa), Allāh shall create for him an exit (from difficulties) and provide for him from sources that he never anticipated."* Further in the same verse (*verse* 3), Allāh says, *"For him who adopts piety (taqwa), Allāh will expiate his sins and grant him an immense reward,"* and *"For him who adapts piety (taqwa), Allāh will create ease in his affairs."* (*verse* 4).

Patience is also a great aid. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"O you who believe, seek assistance by means of patience and Salāh. Indeed Allāh is with the patient ones."* [*Surah 2, verse* 153]

Says Allāh in Surah Zumar, *"The patient ones shall be granted their reward without reservation."* [*Surah 39, verse 10*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh grants patience to the person who wants to be patient. None can be granted a gift better and more extensive than patience." [*Mishkāt p. 163*]

Certain divines have mentioned that *"Patience is more bitter than aloes and sweeter than fruit."*

When the brothers realised that it was Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام before them, they cast their gazes down in shame and submitted, *"By Allāh! Allāh has certainly preferred you above us and we were really among the wrong doers."*

Although they did not directly ask to be fergiven, any noble.person understands that an admission of guilt is equal to a plea for forgiveness. Therefore, SayyidinaYusuf عليه السلام replied, *"There shall be no reproach on you today. May Allāh forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.*

The difficulties and torment that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم suffered at the hands of the people of Makkah is well documented. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports when the Muslims conquered Makkah, the Quraysh were terrified about their plight. They thought they would certainly be executed. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمcame out of the Ka'ba, he made Tawāf, performed two Rakāh Salāh and, standing between the door frames of the Ka'ba, asked the Quraysh, "What do you have to say, and what do you think (of me)?"

They replied, "You are the son of our brother and our uncle. You are forbearing and merciful." Again, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم repeated this question three times, the reply was the same. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I say exactly what Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said, *"There shall be no reproach on you today. May Allāh forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy."*

According to a narration in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم biography written by Ibn Hishām, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked them what they thought of him, the Quraysh replied, "We think that you would treat us well. You are our magnanimous brother, the son of our magnanimous brother." He then told them, "Go! You are all free."

اذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَٰذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ
أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَمَّا فَصَلَتِ الْعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمْ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ يُوسُفَ
لَوْلَا أَن تُفَنِّدُونِ ﴿٩٤﴾ قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَفِي ضَلَالِكَ الْقَدِيمِ ﴿٩٥﴾ فَلَمَّا أَن جَاءَ
الْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَاهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا
لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا خَاطِئِينَ ﴿٩٧﴾ قَالَ سَوْفَ
أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩٨﴾

(93) He said, "Take this shirt of mine and cast it upon the face of my father. He will regain his sight. And bring your entire family to me." (94) When the caravan left, their father said, "Verily, if it were not that you would say that I am babbling, (I would say that) I smell the fragrance of Yusuf." (95) They said, "By Allāh! You are in your old misconception." (96) When the bearer of glad tidings

arrived and cast the shirt upon his face, he regained his sight. He said, "Did I not tell you that I have such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know?" (97) They said, "O our father! Seek forgiveness for our sins. Indeed we were wrongdoers." (98) He said, "I shall shortly seek forgiveness for you from my Lord. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."

SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام SENDS HIS SHIRT TO BE CAST ON HIS FATHER'S FACE AND HE REGAINS HIS SIGHT

When the brothers discovered Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, their duty was accomplished and they began to leave for home. Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told them, *"Take this shirt of mine and cast it upon the face of my father. He will regain his sight (that he had lost because of excessive weeping). And bring your entire family to me."*

"When the caravan (of the brothers') left (and were still in Egypt), their father said, 'Verily, if it were not that you would say that I am babbling (and that I was senile), (I would say that) I smell the fragrance of Yusuf."

The relatives of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام who were present with him said, *"By Allāh! You are in your old misconception."*

However, *"When the bearer of glad tidings* (one of the brothers) *arrived and cast the shirt upon his face, he regained his sight. He said, 'Did I not tell you that I have such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know?"'* He was referring to the time when they told him, *"By Allāh! You keep mentioning Yusuf until you waste away or become totally destroyed,"* which he replied, *'I only complain of my sorrow and my grief to Allāh. And I have been granted such knowledge from Allāh that you do not know about. O my sons! Go and search for Yusuf and his brother. And do not become despondent of Allāh's mercy. Indeed only the disbelieving nation grows despondent of Allāh's mercy."*

Thereupon the brothers admitted, *"O our father! Seek forgiveness for our sins. Indeed we were wrongdoers."*

In reply, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام said, *"I shall shortly seek forgiveness for you from my Lord. Verily He is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم why Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام did not seek forgiveness for them immediately? The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that du'ās are accepted in the last portion of the night. Therefore, Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام wished to repent on their behalf at that time.

Tirmidhi has also reported a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه to make a specific Salāh and supplication *(du'ā)* (for a strong memory) during the last portion of Friday night. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that supplication's *(du'ā's)* are accepted during that time and that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was waiting for this time when he told his sons, *"I shall shortly seek forgiveness for you from my Lord."* [*Durrul Manthūr v. 4 p. 36*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from Sayyidina Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام did not immediately repent on their behalf because

they had oppressed Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام as well and Allāh would not forgive them unless Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام also forgave them. Therefore, he intended to first confirm forgiveness from Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام before seeking forgiveness for them.

Note: The miracles of the Prophets عليهم السلام *(Mu'jizāt)* and those of the pious divines *(Karamāt)* cannot take place without Allāh's will. Ever when the Polytheists of Makkah beseeched the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for miracles, he was unable to do them without Allāh's permission.

The incident of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام clearly demonstrates this fact Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, when Allāh willed it, could smell Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام from an exceptional distance. However, when Allāh did not will it he could not even smell him when he was in a well within the very same district.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ آوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ادْخُلُوا مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ (99) وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا ۖ وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَٰذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِن قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا ۖ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ بِي إِذْ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنَ السِّجْنِ وَجَاءَ بِكُم مِّنَ الْبَدْوِ مِن بَعْدِ أَن نَّزَغَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (100) رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِن تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ (101)

(99) When they entered the presence of Yusuf, he took his parents unto him and said, "Enter Egypt in safety if Allāh wills." (100) He seated his parents upon a throne and they all fell prostrate before him. He said, "O my beloved father! This is the interpretation of my past dream. Allāh has surely made it come true. He had truly been kind to me when He removed me from the prison and brought you from the countryside after Devil (Shaytān) had caused strife between my brothers and me Verily my Lord subtly plans what He wills. Verily He is All Knowing, The Wise." (101) "O my Lord! Indeed You have granted me a part of kingship and taught me the interpretation of dreams. O Creator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Protecting Friend in this world and in the Hereafter. Grant me death in a state of obedience and include me among Your pious bondsmen.

HIS ENTIRE FAMILY ARRIVES IN EGYPT AND THE DREAM IS REALISED WHEN THE PARENTS AND BROTHERS OF SAYYIDINA YUSUF عليه السلام PROSTRATE BEFORE HIM

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told his brothers to bring their entire families with them to Egypt. Therefore, accompanied by their parents, wives and children, all eleven brothers left for Egypt. Upon hearing of their approach, Sayyidina Yusuf

عليه السلام welcomed them outside the city and, taking his parents close to him, told the family, *"Enter Egypt in safety, if Allāh wills."*

When they entered the city, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام honoured all of them and *"He seated his parents upon a throne..."* He placed them on his throne to show their elevated status. On that occasion, his parents and eleven brothers *'fell prostrate before him."*

Prostrating to a person as a token of respect and honour was allowed for the past nations, but not for the ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In our Shari'ah prostrating before any creation is unlawful *(Harām)*, be it out of respect or as an act of worship.

The prostration of all the brothers was the realisation of the same dream that Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام never wanted Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام to disclose to his brothers, fearing that they would attempt to harm him. However, they attempted to harm him, but the plan of Allāh reigned supreme, as it always does. They were all eventually forced to submit to him.

When they all prostrated before Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, he said, *"O my beloved father! This is the interpretation of my past dream. Allāh has surely made it come true."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from the historian Ibn Is'hāq رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه that the real mother of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام is referred to in these verses. Others maintain that his real mother was deceased, after which Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام married her sister. Therefore, his stepmother is referred to whenever mention is made of *"his parents."* Allāh knows best.

Thereafter Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام mentioned the favours of Allāh upon him. He said, *"He had truly been kind to me when He removed me from the prison..."* He mentioned this initially because this was the first stepping stone towards his position as chief minister of Egypt. Attaining this position allowed him to bring his family to Egypt. Therefore, he then mentions that Allāh was kind to him because Allāh, *"brought you from the countryside after Devil (Shaytān) had caused strife between my brothers and me."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" mentions that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام did not mention his escape from the well, and attributed the animosity of his brothers to Devil *(Shaytān)* so that they are not embarrassed any further. He did this because, after forgiving them, it was not befitting that they be made to suffer additional embarrassment. This is the exemplary quality of magnanimous people.

Thereafter he mentioned, *"Verily my Lord subtly plans what He wills. Verily He is All Knowing, The Wise."* Allāh saw to it that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was safely delivered from the well and all His actions are replete with wisdom.

Thereafter, he turned to Allāh and supplicated, *"O my Lord! Indeed You have granted me a part of kingship and taught me the* interpretation of dreams." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that here Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام refers to a large part of sovereignty, because the verse states great bounties. Other commentators state that he mentioned *"a part of kingship"* because he was not made the king of Egypt.

The second bounty of possessing the knowledge to interpret dreams is also extremely great and it was the means by which he attained to the position of minister.

SOME NOTES CONCERNING DREAMS

Allāh has granted certain people the ability to interpret dreams. All interpretations are not necessarily accurate.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Nothing has been left of the Prophethood except the bearers of glad tidings." When the Sahabah رضى الله عنه inquired what were the "bearers of glad tidings," the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Good dreams that a believer *(Mu'min)* sees or that others see about him." [*Mishkāt p. 394*]

Sayyidina Ubāda bin Sāmit رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The dream of a believer *(Mu'min)* is a 46th part of the Prophethood." [*Bukhari v. 2 p.1030*]

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever sees me in a dream has truly seen me because devil *(Shaytān)* cannot assume my appearance." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1032*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Towards the end of time, the dream of a believer *(Mu'min)* will not come close to being false. The truest of dreams will be that of the person who is the most truthful." Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned the three types of dreams. The first are those that are from Allāh. These convey glad tidings. The second are those that are a result of a person's constant thoughts. He will see the things that plague his mind. The third are those that Devil *(Shaytān)* accosts the mind with evil so that a person is grieved by them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then added that whenever a person sees a dream of the third category, he should not relate it to anyone and he should engage in Salāh. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه quotes the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, "Whenever any of you sees an unpleasant dream, he should spit (i.e. make the action of spitting) thrice to the left and thrice recite, *'A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān nir Rajīm.'* Thereafter he should lie on the opposite side." [*Mishkāt p. 394*]

Sayyidina Abu Razīn Aqīli رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The dream of a believer *(Mu'min)* is a part of 46 parts of the Prophethood. It remains upon the leg of a bird until he relates it (i.e. it will not manifest itself). When he relates it to another and it is interpreted, it will transpire according to the interpretation. Relate your dreams only to those people who love you (so that they interpret it favourably) or those who are intelligent and will interpret it well. At the least, if you expect an unfavourable interpretation, then remain silent." [*Tirmidhi*]

THE INTERPRETATION OF SOME DREAMS

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that Sayyidah Khadija رضى الله عنها asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal. She asked,.

"He attested to your Prophethood but passed away before you could begin your duty. What do you think is his position?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "I saw him in a dream wearing white clothes. If he were in Hell, he would have been wearing something else." [*Tirmidhi*]

Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that, in a dream, he was given a cup of milk to drink. He said that he drank so much from it that it could be seen in his fingertips. He then passed the leftover milk to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه. When the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم asked what was the interpretation of this dream, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned that the milk denoted knowledge. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1037*]

Sayyidah Ummul Ala رضى الله عنه reports that she saw in a dream that Sayyidina Uthmān bin Madh'ūn رضى الله عنه had a river. When she narrated this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he said that the actions of Sayyidina Uthmān bin Madh'ūn رضى الله عنه were still running. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1039*]

Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw in a dream that a dark woman with dishevelled hair was leaving Madinah for Juhfa. He interpreted this to mean that a pestilence had left Madinah and gone to Juhfa. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 1044*] This dream was realised as interpreted by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The Epigones *(Tabi'ī)* Sayyidina Muhammad bin Sirīn رحمة الله عليه was gifted with the ability to accurately interpret dreams. Many dreams seem evil, but are, in fact, good. Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه once saw in a dream that he dug up the grave of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and removed the bones. He was extremely perturbed about this and sent someone to ask the interpretation from Sayyidina Muhammmad bin Sirīn رحمة الله عليه. The interpretation was that Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه would be responsible for spreading the knowledge of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Expressing the realisation of the dream to his father, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام said, *"O my beloved father! This is the interpretation of my past dream. Allāh has surely made it come true."*

ACKNOWLEDGING ALLĀH'S FAVOURS IS A FORM OF GRATITUDE

A person shows gratitude to Allāh when he acknowledges Allāh's bounties on him, praises Allāh for them and utilises these in Allāh's obedience. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Will they still refute Allāh's favour?"* [*Surah 16, verse 71*]

Allāh had granted Qārūn an abundance of wealth. He was told, *"And do not seek corruption on earth, for Allāh does not like those who create corruption."* He replied by saying, *'I have been granted all of this because of the knowledge I possess."* By not acknowledging that Allāh had conferred these bounties to him and by attributing it to himself, his resultant destruction is known to all.

The supplication's *(du'ā's)* taught by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم contain admission of Allāh's bounties on people. One of these is the Sayyidul Istighfār (the chief of all repentance), which is:

Translation ["O Allāh! You are my Lord. 'There is no deity besides

You. You have created me and I am your slave. I shall be steadfast upon Your pledge and promise as far as I am able. I seek refuge with You from the evil of my sins. I acknowledge Your bounties upon me and admit my sins. So forgive me, because none can forgive sins except You.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that if a person recites this supplication *(du'ā)* with conviction in the morning and then dies before the evening of the same day, he will be among the inhabitants of Heaven *(Jannah)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then mentioned that if a person recites this du'ā with conviction in the evening and then dies before the next morning, he will be of the inhabitants of Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*Bukhari v. 2 p.933*]

THE SUPPLICATION *(DU'Ā)* TO DIE AS A MUSLIM AND TO BE RAISED AMONG THE PIOUS

Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام continued to supplicate saying, *"O Creator of the heavens and the earth! You are my Protecting Friend in this world and in the Hereafter. Grant me death in a state of obedient* (as a Muslim) *and include me among Your pious bondsmen."* This supplication teaches us that the most fortunate occurrence that could happen to a person is to die with Belief *(Imān)*. One should also pray to Allāh to make one like those who excel one in piety.

The question is asked about why Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام prayed for death, when this is not permissible; especially when one is in good stead? The reply is that he never made such a prayer. He never asked for death. All he did was that he asked Allāh that when Allāh decreed his death, he desired that he leave this world in an appropriate condition.

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ ٱلْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ وَمَآ أَكْثَرُ ٱلنَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَمَا تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

(102) This narrative is from the accounts of the unseen with which We inspire you. You were not with them when they collectively resolved their affair and when they plotted. (103) Most people will not believe even though you aspire for it. (104) You do not ask them recompense for it. This is but advice for the universe.

RELATING ACCOUNTS OF THE UNSEEN WAS A PROOF OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Friend and foe are all aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was neither lettered, nor did he associate with anyone who could have informed him about the incident of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that the Jews told the polytheists to inquire from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم why the Bani Isrā'īl left their homeland to settle in

Egypt. In reply to this question, Surah Yusuf was revealed. The Jews and the polytheists never expected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to reply to the question. When he did, they still refused to accept him as the Holy Prophet of Allāh.

With regard to the story of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, Allāh says, [*This narrative is from the accounts of the unseen with which We inspire you. You were not with them* [the brothers of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام] *when they collectively resolved their affair and when they plotted* [against Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام]." This fact was apparent to everyone. Therefore, the only way by which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could have known of this story was through divine revelation.

According to certain narrations in "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 13 p.65*), the Jews and the Polytheists promised to accept Islām if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could relate the story accurately. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم desired very much that they accept Islām, but they still did not. Allāh says, *'Most people will not believe even though you aspire for it* (for them to believe)."

"You do not ask them recompense for it. This is but advice for the universe." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not be held responsible for their disbelief, nor would he be affected by it.

NOTES, LESSONS AND RULINGS

1. It is indeed a great blessing of Allāh to see a good dream or to be able to interpret dreams.

2. Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام warned Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام not to relate his dream to his brothers because he feared that they may harm him. It is learnt from this that it is permissible to forewarn a person of anticipated danger from another. 'This will not be regarded as backbiting.

3. 'The evil actions of Sayyidina Yusuf's عليه السلام brothers denote that they were not Prophets عليهم السلام. The incident proves that the children of a pious person (the Prophet in this case) can also commit major sins. It is also learnt that no parent can be held responsible and blamed for the sins of their children when the parents have taught their children well and guided them adequately.

4. Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام had twelve children. Ten from one wife, while Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام and Bin Yāmīn were from another. Another name of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was Isra'īl. Therefore, the progeny of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام are referred to as the 'Bani Isra'īl (the children of Isra'īl).

Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام and his wife passed away in 'Egypt, but he made the bequest that he be buried in his homeland of Kan'ān. After the demise of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, the Bani Isra'īl had no position in the government of 'Egypt. They did not return to their homeland and the 'Egyptians always persecuted them, as recounted in Surah Baqarah and Surah A'rāf. They were so weakened that they could not raise any objection when their male offspring were slaughtered:

When Allāh sent Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, the Bani Isra'īl numbered 600,000. In the valley of Tīh, they were divided into the twelve tribes. Certain books of history and exegesis (tafsīr) mention that the Bani Isra'īl left 'Egypt after 400 years.

5. When the brothers requested Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, 'Sent! him with us tomorrow so that he may eat and play with us," Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام replied, "Indeed it grieves me that he should go with you. I fear that you should be neglect of him and then a wolf would devour him." He did not tell them that he was not sending Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام with them because play and sport are prohibited acts. 'Scholars (Ulama) have deduced from this that sport and leisure are not forbidden acts, as long as they are within the constraints of the Shari'ah . 'When the intention is good; a person will even be rewarded for this act.

Sayyidina Uqba bin Āmir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, You will conquer Rome (parts of Europe) and Allāh will protect you from the evil of its people. Therefore, none of you should fail to play with his arrows (i.e. practise archery)." [Muslim]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also emphasised training horses [Mishkāt p. 336]. Both archery and horse-riding aid in Jihād and one would be rewarded for practising with modern weapons for the cause of Jihād.

Sport is permissible when the private parts of the body are not exposed, Salāh is not missed; no gambling is involved and no laws of the Shari'ah are contravened.

6. "Do not kill Yusuf but throw him in a dark well so that some travellers may take him away, if you intend doing something." 'The eldest brother forwarded this opinion to the rest of them. It is learnt from this that a person should try to prevent others from evil If he is totally incapable of doing so, then he should; at least, try to convince them to do something less evil.

7. Allāh says that when Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was cast into the well "We sent revelation to him that you will certainly remind them of this matter when they will not realise... "This revelation that he received in the well was not revelation of prophethood that is revealed via Jibr'īl عليه السلام. It refers to inspiration that pious people also receive even though the Arabic word "Wahi" is used: 'The word "Wahi" is therefore not restricted to the divine revelation that the Prophets عليهم السلام receive.

The inspiration that Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام received in the well was just like that which the mother of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام received; as mentioned in Surah Qasas where Allāh says, "We sent revelation (inspiration) to the mother of Mūsa to suckle him...

The same is referred to in Surah Nahl where Allāh says, Your Lord inspired the bee..." In both these verses the Arabic word "Wahi" is used. 'While in the well, Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was not yet a The Prophet, as confirmed by verse 22 where Allāh says, "When he came of age, We granted him wisdom and knowledge." This refers to his position of the Holy Prophethood. Therefore the revelation that he received in the well was

not Prophetic revelation, but inspiration.

8. To substantiate their claim that the wolf ate Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, the brothers removed the shirt of Sayyidina Yusuf before throwing him into the well and smeared the blood of some animal on it. Referring to this Allāh says, "They came with false blood on his shirt."

However, they failed to rip up the shirt to indicate that the wolf devoured Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Therefore, when Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام saw the shirt in perfect order, he realised that they were lying. For this reason, he told them, 'But your souls have contrived this matter for you."

It is learnt from this that although a judge will pass judgement in a case in accordance with the testimony of witnesses and by means of oaths taken by the parties he should also consider the circumstances and other important clues and evidence.

9. After Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام realised that his sons were lying to him, he accepted that he was now unable to do anything. Therefore, he said, "However, I will exercise patience without any complaint and I shall see Allāh's assistance against what you have devised."' We learn from this that a person should never fail to keep his attention focussed on Allāh for assistance even though he is exercising patience.

10. The verses of the Qur'ān clearly denote that it was the minister of 'Egypt's treasury who bought Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, and that the king of 'Egypt was another person. 'The minister's name was Qitfīr and the king was Rayyān. The king was from the Amāliqa tribe and; according to the books of history, he accepted Islām and died before Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام as a Muslim.

11. The wife of the minister, commonly referred to as Zulaikha, is reported to have married Sayyidina Yusuf *عليه السلام. This belief has its source in the narrations of the Bani Isra'īl. 'The Qur'ān and the Ahadīth do not mention anything like this.*

12. When the minister's wife attempted to seduce Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام "She locked the doors and said; 'I am telling you to come to me. 'He said; 'I seek refuge with Allāh Indeed my caretaker has treated me honourably How can I betray him?). Surely the oppressors will never succeed (even though they may seem to be successful temporarily in this world)."

13. Even though Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام knew that the doors were locked, he raced for the doors because he was desperate to escape sin. He did what he could and Allāh saw to the rest.

14. Just as the ranks of good deeds vary according to their level of difficulty, so too does abstention from evil vary. Although a person will be greatly rewarded for refusing the seduction of an ugly, low class woman, he will be much more greatly rewarded for refusing the advances of a beautiful and noble lady.

Enumerating the seven people who will be shaded by Allāh's throne on the Day of Judgement, The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *mentioned one of them as being the man who was called to sin by a beautiful lady of noble birth and he said to her, "Indeed I fear Allāh" [Mishkāt p. 68]*

The woman who tried to charm Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *was this type of a lady, yet he refused to respond to her demands. This required a great deal of piety (Taqwa) and Belief (Imān). Of course, the assistance and guidance of Allāh are of paramount importance. Referring to this, Allāh mentions, "In this manner (Our fate had decreed the matter) so that 'We averted evil and lewdness from him."*

15. Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *displayed such fine character and cordiality towards the inmates of the prison that they began to love him. It was for this reason that the two men came to him for the interpretation of their dreams and they told him, "We truly deem you to be of the righteous."*

It is essential for a preacher to have noble qualities and to be cordial to all people. The character of Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *was so exemplary that the person who served drinks to the king addressed him as "O Yusuf! O most truthful!" when he came to inquire the interpretation of the king's dream.*

16. As was already mentioned; a preacher seeks the opportunity to preach to a person. The time is especially right when the person requires something of the preacher, for then he will be attentive. It was for this reason that Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *first preached the message of Oneness of Allāh (Tauhīd) to the two inmates before interpreting their dreams. He also seized the opportunity to introduce himself as one who followed the religion (Dīn) of his forefathers viz. Sayyidina Ibrahīm* علیہ السلام*, Sayyidina Is'hāq* علیہ السلام *and Sayyidina Ya'qūb* علیہ السلام*.*

17. Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *told the freed person "Mention me to your master." This proves that a person is allowed to resort to means to assist one's self. This does not oppose Tawakkul (trust in Allāh).*

18. Irrespective of the means adopted; help and relief will only come when Allāh ordains it. It has often been noticed that a patient meets the right doctor only when the hour of cure is imminent. It is only then that he receives the guidance to make supplication (du'ā). However, one should be hopeful of Allāh's assistance and still adopt whatever means possible.

In a similar manner, Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *was only released from prison when Allāh decreed it. It was only then that the person recalled him and mentioned him to the king.*

19. When the person came to Sayyidina Yusuf علیہ السلام *to inquire about the interpretation of the dream, he did not rebuke him for only recalling him after so many years.*

20. Together with the interpretation of the kings dream, Sayyidina

Yusuf عليه السلام also tendered a plan of action. This was given according to his experience. This fact proves that it is not against the demands of piety that a person offers worldly advice to people based on his experience. In fact, this is commendable since people benefit from it.

21. *When Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام prompted the investigation, he requested that the king find out 'what is the condition of the women who cut their hands." He did not request the king to call for the minister wife because he appreciated the kindness and generosity that she and her husband showed to him for many years previously. Only after the other ladies admitted his innocence did the minister wife say on her own, "The truth is now out. I attempt to seduce him to realise my motives and he is of the truthful"*

22. *When Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام was proven innocent he mentioned; "I do not exonerate myself Surely the soul insistently orders evil, except on whom Allāh showers mercy." He acknowledged the fact that it was only by Allāh's grace that he could have abstained from sin. Here is a lesson for all who abstain from sin. Never should one be boastful and attribute the honour to oneself One should realise this as Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام mentioned, "'Undoubtedly my Lord is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

23. *The Qur'ān mentions the three stages of one's soul viz. Ammāra, Lawwāma and Mutma'inna. Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه writes in Bayānul Qur'ān that the Ammāra is the one that insistently commands evil acts. 'When it repents sincerely, it is forgiven and becomes Lawwāma. It is then perfected to become the Mutma'inna because of Allāh's mercy and grace.*

In brief the Ammāra becomes Lawwāma because of Allāh's quality of "Most Forgiving" and the Lawwāma becomes Mutma'inna because of Allāh's quality of being the "Most Merciful."

24. *Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام told the king, "Indeed I am protective and knowledgeable. "This shows that it is permissible for a person to mention his attributes for the ask of a religious necessity. As long as the person does not say this out of pride, it will not fall into the category of proclaiming ones piety, which is condemned in the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth.*

25. *When the brothers requested Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام to send Bin Yāmīn with them, he said; 'Should I trust you with him as I trusted you with his brother before? But Allāh is the best Protector and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy." This statement shows that he trusted only Allāh, even though he mistrusted his sons.*

Even when Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام made his sons take the oath to return Bin Yāmīn, has added the clause, 'unless you are surrounded (overwhelmed!)." This also

shows that he realised that the final decision in every matter rests with Allāh, Therefore, whenever a person takes an oath, he should exclude those probable situations that are beyond his control.

وَكَأَيِّن مِّنْ ءَايَةٍ فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ يَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿105﴾
وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُم بِٱللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُم مُّشْرِكُونَ ﴿106﴾ أَفَأَمِنُوٓا۟ أَن تَأْتِيَهُمْ غَٰشِيَةٌ مِّنْ
عَذَابِ ٱللَّهِ أَوْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿107﴾

(105) There are numerous signs in the heavens and the earth by which they pass, yet they ignore them. (106) Most of them believe in Allāh in such a manner that they still ascribe partners to Him. (107) Do they feel secure that a calamity from Allāh's punishment (will not) befall them, or that the Hour (will not) come to them suddenly while they are unwary?

PEOPLE PASS BY MANY NATURAL SIGNS, YET THEY DO NOT BELIEVE

Describing the condition of those who are invited to believe in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"There are numerous (natural) signs in the heavens and the earth by which they pass, yet they ignore them."* They do not ponder over the various creations of Allāh, which denote that He is The One and Omnipotent.

'Most of them believe in Allāh in such a manner that they still ascribe partners to Him." When they are told to believe in Allāh, they admit that they believe in Him, but add that the other various gods are His partners. This type of Belief *(Imān)* is worthless since they do not believe in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, nor in the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says that these people still live peacefully, being unafraid of Allāh's punishment and the Day of Judgement. Allāh says, *"Do they feel secure that a calamity (will not) befall them from Allāh's punishment, or that the Hour (will not) come to them suddenly while they are unwary?"*

In verse 45 of Surah Nahl, Allāh says, *"Do those who plot evil schemes rest assured that Allāh will not plunge them into the earth or afflict them with a punishment from whence they do not perceive?"*

قُلْ هَٰذِهِۦ سَبِيلِىٓ أَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا۠ وَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَنِى ۖ وَسُبْحَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ
ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿108﴾

(108) Say, This is my way. I call towards Allāh with insight, as well as those who follow me. Allāh is Pure, and I am not from those who ascribe partners to Allāh.

TELL THEM THAT MY WAY IS THAT I CALL TOWARDS ALLĀH

In this verse Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to announce to

all people that he, together with all his followers are steadfast on the path of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, calling others towards it with *"insight.* "They are all convinced of the truth of their beliefs and will not be deterred from it by anything.

Such should be the quality of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. They do not allow any doubts to creep into their minds and are prepared to reply conclusively to any objections that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* may raise.

"Allāh is Pure, and I am not from those who ascribe partners to Allāh." A believer *(Mu'min)* should be exonerated from whatever the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and polytheists claim and believe.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰٓ ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ وَلَدَارُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿109﴾

(109) All the messengers that We sent before you were men from various cities to whom We had sent revelation. Have these people not travelled in the lands and seen what was the outcome of those before them? Indeed the home of the Hereafter is best for those who adopt piety (taqwa). Do you not understand?

ALL THE PREVIOUS HOLY PROPHETS عليهم السلام WERE HUMANS

Of the various futile objections raised by the polytheists when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم preached to them was that they demanded that the Holy Prophet be an angel. In reply to this Allāh says, *"All the messengers that We sent before you were men from various cities to whom We had sent revelation."* The reason that all the Prophets عليهم السلام were humans was that they were sent to preach to and teach humans. Therefore, they were best equipped to demonstrate Allāh's injunctions to the people because they spoke the language and they possessed the same understanding and temperaments of humans. Angels, being a different creation, would have been unable to satisfactorily convey the message of the various Shari'ahs to the people.

This verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم so as to inform him that the nations of all the previous Prophets عليهم السلام also raised the same objections. Allāh quotes the speech of these people in Surah Ibrahīm, where He says, *"They said, 'You are but mere humans like ourselves.*'" Allāh's instruction to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was that he should bear all of this with patience, just as all the previous Anbiya عليهم السلام did.

"Have these people not travelled in the lands and seen what was the outcome of those before them?" Here Allāh addresses people at large, telling them that if they saw what was the plight of the destroyed nations of the past, they would desist from their obstinacy and believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Indeed the home of the Hereafter is best for those who adopt piety (taqwa)." The

pleasures of the Hereafter are reserved for those who abstain from evil and carry out all the Obligations *(Farāidh)*, Compulsories *(Wājibāt)*, preferables *(Mustahabbāt)*, etc of religion *(Dīn)*. These blessinigs are far superior to the transitory ones of this world, which actually distract a person from Allāh and from doing good deeds.

"Do you not understand?" People seem not to understand that the everlasting blessings of the Hereafter are much better than the temporary ones of this world. However, people still hanker after these.

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا ٱسۡتَيۡـَٔسَ ٱلرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوٓاْ أَنَّهُمۡ قَدۡ كُذِبُواْ جَآءَهُمۡ نَصۡرُنَا فَنُجِّيَ مَن نَّشَآءُۖ
وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأۡسُنَا عَنِ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلۡمُجۡرِمِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾

(110) Until the time came when the messengers grew despondent and they thought that they erred in their understanding. Then Our assistance came to them and We rescued whom We willed. Our punishment cannot be averted from the criminal nation.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE TRANSGRESSORS CANNOT BE AVERTED

This verse explains that the Prophets عليهم السلام grew despondent when Allāh's assistance did not come to them immediately. They began to think that perhaps they were wrong to think that Allāh would punish the wrongdoers immediately. This occurred because Allāh granted the disbelievers *(kuffār)* an abundance of worldly pleasures and they continued to pass their lives in ease.

However, Allāh punishes nations only when He decrees it fit. Although He promised His assistance to the Prophets عليهم السلام, he never specified to them exactly when it would come to them. In this manner, Allāh's punishment was delayed until (as Allāh says in Surah Baqarah), *"the messenger (of Allāh) and the believers said, 'When will the help of Allāh come?' Surely, the help of Allāh is near."* [*Surah 2, verse 214*]

Indeed, Allāh's promise was always true and the help came. Allāh says that when they reached this juncture, *"Then Our assistance came to them and We rescued whom We willed. Our punishment cannot be averted from the criminal nation."*

لَقَدۡ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمۡ عِبۡرَةٞ لِّأُوْلِي ٱلۡأَلۡبَٰبِۗ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثٗا يُفۡتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن
تَصۡدِيقَ ٱلَّذِي بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ وَتَفۡصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَهُدٗى وَرَحۡمَةٗ لِّقَوۡمٖ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

(111) In their narratives there is certainly a lesson for people of intelligence. This Qur'ān is not a fabricated tale, but a confirmation to all the scriptures before it, a detailed explanation of all things, a guidance and a mercy for the believing folk.

THERE IS A LESSON IN THE NARRATIVES FOR PEOPLE OF INTELLIGENCE

Four things are mentioned in this final verse of Surah Yusuf. The first is that *'in their narratives there is certainly a lesson for people of intelligence."* These are the ones who ponder and deliberate over the subject matter that it contains.

Secondly, Allāh says, *"This Qur'ān is not a fabricated tale...* "The Qur'ān and everything contained in it is the truth from Allāh and is not the product of any messenger.

Thirdly, Allāh says that the Qur'ān is *"a confirmation to all the scriptures before* it..."It contains the teachings of the previous scriptures. Therefore, the Jews and Christians should be especially influenced by it. Addressing the Jews in Surah Baqarah, Allāh says, *"Believe in what I have revealed in confirmation of what you have with you, and do not become the first disbelievers."* [Surah 2, verse 41]

In conclusion Allāh says that the Qur'ān is *"a detailed explanation of all things, a guidance and a mercy for the believing folk."* These are the people who accept its teachings and who practise accordingly.

سورة الرعد

Madinan	Surah Ar-Ra'd	Verses 43

[The Thunder] XIII

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الٓمٓرۚ تِلْكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِۗ وَٱلَّذِىٓ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا
يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى رَفَعَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَاۖ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِۖ وَسَخَّرَ
ٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَۖ كُلٌّ يَجْرِى لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّىۚ يُدَبِّرُ ٱلْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لَعَلَّكُم بِلِقَآءِ
رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى مَدَّ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَٰسِىَ وَأَنْهَٰرًاۖ وَمِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ
جَعَلَ فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِۖ يُغْشِى ٱلَّيْلَ ٱلنَّهَارَۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾
وَفِى ٱلْأَرْضِ قِطَعٌ مُّتَجَٰوِرَٰتٌ وَجَنَّٰتٌ مِّنْ أَعْنَٰبٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ
يُسْقَىٰ بِمَآءٍ وَٰحِدٍ وَنُفَضِّلُ بَعْضَهَا عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِى ٱلْأُكُلِۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ
لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Mīm Rā. These are the verses of the Book. Whatever has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, but most people do not believe. (2) It is Allāh who raised the skies without any pillar that you see, then rose to the Throne and subjugated the sun and the moon. Each runs to its appointed term. He plans affairs and explains the signs in detail so that you may be convinced of meeting your Lord. (3) It is He Who spread the earth and placed mountains and rivers in it. He creates pairs from every type of fruit and covers the day with the night. Indeed there are signs in this for those people who ponder. (4) On the earth there are neighbouring tracts of land, orchards of grapes, plantations and

date palms, some of which intermingle, while others do not intermingle. All are irrigated by one water and We accord distinction to one over the other. Verily in this are signs for those who understand.

VARIOUS SIGNS OFALLĀH'S ONENESS AND MIGHT

Allāh begins Surah Rād by saying, *"Alif Lām Mīm Rā.* "These are the letters of Muqatta'āt. These letters were discussed in beginning of Surah Baqarah.

"These are the verses of the Book (the Qur'ān). *Whatever has been revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, but most people do not believe."* They do not believe because they do not reflect but insist on following the deviant ways of their forefathers. Their disbelief will not affect the veracity of the Qur'ān in the least.

"It is Allāh who raised the skies without any pillar that you see..." They seem not to notice that the highly elevated skies are suspended without any visible supports, yet they do not collapse.

Describing Himself further, Allāh says that after raising the skies He, *"then rose to the Throne...* "The details of this are explained in the commentary of verse 54 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

Allāh also *"subjugated the sun and the moon. Each runs to its appointed term."* All of these celestial bodies will exist in the manner that Allāh ordained and up to the period stipulated by Him. Even the speed of their orbits is according to His decree.

Concerning the sun, Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"The sun travels towards its destination. This is the decree of the Mighty, the All Knowing. We have stipulated phases for the moon, until it returns like a branch of an old date palm. It is not possible for the sun to catch up with the moon, nor is it possible for the night to precede the day. They all swim within their orbits."* [*Surah 36, verses 38-40*]

According to certain commentators, the *"appointed term"* refers to the end of the universe i.e. Judgment day *(Qiyāmah).*

"He plans affairs (in the entire universe) *and explains the signs in detail so that you may be convinced of meeting your Lord."* Some Scholars *(Ulama)* explain that the *"signs"* refer to the verses of the Qur'ān. Others maintain that *"the signs"* refer to the proofs of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd),* be they present in the Shari'ah or in the natural world.

Once a person understands that Allāh is able to create all these various creations, He is perfectly able to resurrect the dead on the Day of Judgement, when all will meet Him.

"It is Him Who spread the earth and placed mountains and rivers on it." Allāh says in Surah Luqman that He *"has placed mountains on earth so that it does not shake with you". The* rivers were placed on earth as one of the greatest bounties of Allāh that have profound benefits for man.

The spreading of the earth does not contradict the fact that the earth is spherical. Because of its vastness, the earth seems flat to man, thereby enabling him to travel on earth. Even an ant on an extremely large ball cannot be

compared to a human upon the earth.

"He creates pairs from every type of fruit..." *e.g. There are the sweet and the sour, the large and the small, as well as various colours of the same fruit. Because of the fact that colours, textures and tastes have so many variants, certain commentators have mentioned that the word "pairs" is not restricted to two, but two is just the beginning.*

"and covers the day with the night." The night follows the day and extinguishes its light.

"Indeed there are signs in this for those people who ponder." If people would really reflect on all these portents, they will realise that it can only be Allāh Who has created these things, Who preserves them and Who controls their functioning.

"On the earth there are neighbouring tracts of land, orchards of grapes, plantations and date palms, some of which intermingle, while -others do not intermingle." Trees branch out into numerous branches, where one branch often becomes manifold. There are those also that remain a single trunk, like the date palm.

"All are irrigated by one water and We accord distinction to one over the other." Although the water that reaches all of these plants is the same, they all differ greatly. Allāh has made some fruits sweeter than others even though they may grow in salty land. The land does not affect the produce.

"Verily in this are signs for those who understand." When they ponder over these signs, they will realise the Omnipotence of Allāh.

وَإِن تَعْجَبْ فَعَجَبٌ قَوْلُهُمْ أَءِذَا كُنَّا تُرَٰبًا أَءِنَّا لَفِى خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا۟ بِرَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلْأَغْلَٰلُ فِىٓ أَعْنَاقِهِمْ ۖ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿5﴾ وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِمُ
ٱلْمَثُلَٰتُ ۗ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِّلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ ظُلْمِهِمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ﴿6﴾
وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ
﴿7﴾

(5) If you are astonished, then their statement is also astonishing (that), "When we become sand, will we be created anew?" These are the ones who disbelieve in their Lord. They are the ones who shall have yokes upon their necks and they shall be the inmates of Hell, where they shall abide forever. (6) They seek to hasten the evil before the good, whereas the incidents of punishment have passed before them. Indeed your Lord is forgiving towards His bondsmen despite their oppression. And indeed your Lord is severe in punishment. (7) The disbelievers say, "Why is some sign not revealed to him from his Lord? You are but a Warner, and every nation has a guide."

THE REJECTION OF RESURRECTION IS INDEED SURPRISING THESE REJECTERS WILL BE CONDEMNED TO HELL

Allāh addressed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying that *"If you are astonished* (at them), *then their statement is also astonishing* (that they say), *'When we become sand, will we be created anew?"* It is indeed astounding that people who have witnessed that Allāh has created them and their forefathers when they were once lifeless, can find it difficult to believe that Allāh will resurrect these bodies?

"These are the ones who disbelieve in their Lord." As a result of this behaviour in this world, they will be punished in the Hereafter. Their punishment will be that, *"They are the ones who shall have yokes upon their necks and they shall be the inmates of Hell, where they shall abide forever."*

"They seek to hasten the evil before the good..." They mockingly request that Allāh's punishment be brought to them instead of begging Allāh's forgiveness. They fail to realise that once the punishment comes, no one shall be saved from it.

Allāh says in verse 8 of Surah Hūd (*Surah 11*), *"Indeed, if We have to postpone the punishment from them for a little while, they will certainly say, 'What holds it back?' Behold! The day when it will afflict them, it will not be averted from them and their mockery will engulf them."*

Allāh continues to say that they demand punishment *"whereas the incidents of punishment have passed before them."* This clearly demonstrates their foolishness.

"Indeed your Lord is Forgiving towards His bondsmen despite their oppression." Sometimes Allāh forgives them because of their good deeds, and sometimes by afflicting them with difficulties associated with wealth and children. However, it should be borne in mind that *"indeed your Lord is severe in punishment."* Therefore, people should never allow themselves to be fooled by Allāh's benevolence, thereby falling into more sin. Allāh can still punish them if He wills.

"The disbelievers say, 'Why is some sign not revealed to him from his Lord?" Because of their obstinacy, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* made various excuses to falsify the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم claim to apostleship. They said that they would accept him as a Prophet only when he performed the miracles that they demanded.

In reality, various other signs and proofs attest to his Prophethood without the need for miracles. Even when miracles were shown to them, they still refused to believe. This proved that they were insincere in their requests.

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"You are but a warner..."* The task of the Prophet was merely to warn the people about the evil consequences of their evil and to propagate the religion *(D'īn)*. He could not force them to believe. Allāh reserves the right to show miracles to the people when He willed, not when they wanted them.

"....and every nation has a guide." Every nation received a messenger. They also experienced rejection by the people. Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse by informing him that all the other Prophets عليهم السلام experienced the same treatment. Allāh says in Surah Ahqāf, *"Exercise patience like*

how the resolute ones amongst the messengers exercised patience and do not .be hasty regarding them." [*Surah 46, verse* 35]

Allāh says that every nation received a *"guide."* He did not say that every nation had 'The Prophet.' The reason for this is that even the scholars and learned ones of a nation can serve the purpose of guiding people, according to the teachings of their Prophet. If no Prophet reached any portion of the world, it will not be contradictory to this verse. A disciple or deputy of the Prophet would have reached the people there even though we may not have heard about it.

When a person is not proven to have been a Prophet, it will be incorrect to ascribe Prophethood to him merely on the basis that he was a leader to a nation and because Allāh says, *"every nation has a guide."* This misnomer is prevalent with regard to the founders of religion's *(D'īn's)* such as Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. One should refrain from making such foolish claims.

The verse cannot substantiate the claim that these people were the Prophets because of the fact that the word 'guide' does not necessarily refer to a Prophet. Without religious proof, such statements cannot be made.

Another factor that disproves this theory is that these people have propagated many idolatrous beliefs and they are often depicted naked (or semi-naked). A Prophet of Allāh could never be so shameless as to expose himself in this manner.

Although the possibility does exist that the followers of these people adulterated their teachings and displayed them naked, this fact can also not be established beyond doubt. Therefore, one should abstain from holding such beliefs. Believing that any person after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a Prophet will, of course, constitute infidelity (*kufr*).

اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ ۖ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ
عِندَهُ بِمِقْدَارٍ ﴿٨﴾ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ ﴿٩﴾ سَوَاءٌ مِّنكُم
مَّنْ أَسَرَّ الْقَوْلَ وَمَن جَهَرَ بِهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍ بِاللَّيْلِ وَسَارِبٌ بِالنَّهَارِ ﴿١٠﴾ لَهُ
مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ
حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ مِن
وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

(8) Allāh knows what every female bears and the shortages and excesses in the womb. Everything is perfectly stipulated with Him. (9) He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Great, The Lofty. (10) Whoever whispers, speaks loudly is hidden in the night, or is walking in the day, they are all alike. (11) For everyone there are angels before him and following behind him, protecting him from Allāh's order. Undoubtedly Allāh does not change the conditions of a nation until they change the condition within themselves. When Allāh intends

evil to befall a nation, there is none to avert it. They will have no helper besides Allāh.

ALLĀH KNOWS WHAT IS IN THE WOMBS, THE SEEN, THE UNSEEN AND EVERY SILENT AND LOUD SOUND

Allāh declares His complete knowledge in these verses. He knows the detailed condition of every pregnant woman. Allāh knows exactly when the foetus was conceived, when it will be delivered, the sex of the child and every minute detail about the features and situation of the child. Allāh is also aware of every development of the child.

Certain ignorant ones claim that people also are able to tell the gender of the child, so this knowledge is not exclusive to Allāh. They fail to understand that Allāh's knowledge is not merely based on instruments and experience. His knowledge is complete and infallible, while people err incessantly. Allāh's knowledge is so vast that He also knows exactly how many children will be born to any man or woman, and exactly when each child will be born.

"Everything is perfectly stipulated with Him." Included in the general meaning of this verse is the detail of how long a child will remain in the womb, how long will it live and how much sustenance it will receive.

Further elucidating Allāh's knowledge, He says, *"He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Great, The Lofty. Whoever whispers, speaks loudly, is hidden in the night, or is walking in the day, they are all alike."* He knows of every one of these as perfectly as the other.

THE ANGELS PROTECT PEOPLE

"For everyone there are angels before him and following behind him, protecting him from Allāh's order." "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه that Allāh has appointed angels to protect people from all sides. They ensure that no physical harm befalls people. However, when Allāh's predestined matters are about to occur, only then do they leave the person.

ALLĀH WILL NOT CHANGE THE FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS OF PEOPLE UNTIL THEY BECOME DISOBEDIENT AND WORTHY OF HIS PUNISHMENT

"Undoubtedly Allāh does not change the conditions of a nation until they change the condition within themselves." When people begin to disobey Allāh and resort to evil, only then does Allāh change the favourable conditions that they enjoy. When this situation prevails, the protecting angels also leave them and they are exposed to Allāh's punishment. A similar scenario is explained with the example of a particular town in Surah Nahl [*Surah 16, verse 112*].

"When Allāh intends evil to befall a nation, there is none to avert it. They will have no helper besides Allāh." When Allāh decides that any calamity should afflict people, none can come to their aid.

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى يُرِيكُمُ ٱلْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنشِئُ ٱلسَّحَابَ ٱلثِّقَالَ ﴿١٢﴾ وَيُسَبِّحُ ٱلرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِۦ وَيُرْسِلُ ٱلصَّوَٰعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُمْ يُجَـٰدِلُونَ فِى ٱللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْمِحَالِ ﴿١٣﴾

(12) Allāh is the One Who shows you the lightning that you fear and have hopes in. He is the One Who creates the heavy clouds. (13) Ra'd praises Him together with glorifying Him, and the angels also do so out of their fear for Him. Allāh sends the bolts of lightning to strike whomsoever He wills while they are disputing regarding Allāh. Allāh is fiercely Powerful.

THE CLOUDS, THE LIGHTNING AND THE THUNDER

When Allāh sends the lightning, some people (like travellers) become scared because the storm might affect their journey. On the other hand, people (like the farmers) are hopeful of beneficial rains for their crops. With reference to this, Allāh says, *"Allāh is the One Who shows you the lightning that (some of) you fear and (others) have hopes in.*

"He is the One Who creates the heavy clouds." These are then sent to wherever Allāh wills the rain. Allāh says in verse 57 of Surah A'rāf, *"(Allāh is) He Who sends the winds ahead of His mercy as bearers of glad tidings. Until, when it carries heavy clouds, We lead it to a dead piece of ground and then shower rains upon it, extracting thereby all kinds offer it. In this manner We shall resurrect the dead so that you may take heed."*

Allāh say further in the above verses, *"Ra'd praises Him together with glorifying Him, and the angels also do so because of their fear for Him. "* Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی اللہ عنہ that a Jew once asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, "O Abul Qāsim! Tell us what is Ra'd?"

The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied, "Ra'd is an angel of Allāh who has been appointed to see to the clouds. He has with him a cleaving instrument made of fire, with which he pulls the clouds according to Allāh orders." The Jew then asked what are the sounds that are heard. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied that they were the sounds of the clouds being rebuked by Ra'd while he leads them to their destination.

"Allāh sends the bolts of lightning to strike whomsoever He wills while they are disputing regarding Allāh. Allāh is fiercely Powerful." Sayyidina Anas رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once sent one of the Sahabāh رضی اللہ عنہ to convey the message of Islām to one of the leaders during the period of ignorance. The person retorted, "What is this Allāh that you call me to? Is He made of iron, copper, silver or gold?"

The Sahabi رضی اللہ عنہ returned to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم with the news of this person's insolence. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم again sent someone to him, but he behaved in the same manner. When the Sahabi رضی اللہ عنہ returned to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم the second time, he again sent the message a third time.

When the Sahabi رضى الله عنه returned the third time with the same reply, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allāh has sent a bolt of lightning to incinerate the person. The above verse was then revealed.

According to another narration, a bolt of lightning struck him when he was arguing with the Sahabi رضى الله عنه upon the third occasion. The bolt decapitated him. [*Majma'uz Zawāid v. 7 p.42*]

لَهُۥ دَعۡوَةُ ٱلۡحَقِّۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ لَا يَسۡتَجِيبُونَ لَهُم بِشَيۡءٍ إِلَّا كَبَٰسِطِ كَفَّيۡهِ إِلَى ٱلۡمَآءِ
لِيَبۡلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَٰلِغِهِۦۚ وَمَا دُعَآءُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَٰلٖ (14) وَلِلَّهِ يَسۡجُدُ مَن فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ
وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ طَوۡعٗا وَكَرۡهٗا وَظِلَٰلُهُم بِٱلۡغُدُوِّ وَٱلۡأٓصَالِ۩ (15) قُلۡ مَن رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ قُلِ
ٱللَّهُۚ قُلۡ أَفَٱتَّخَذۡتُم مِّن دُونِهِۦٓ أَوۡلِيَآءَ لَا يَمۡلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمۡ نَفۡعٗا وَلَا ضَرّٗاۚ قُلۡ هَلۡ يَسۡتَوِي ٱلۡأَعۡمَىٰ
وَٱلۡبَصِيرُ أَمۡ هَلۡ تَسۡتَوِي ٱلظُّلُمَٰتُ وَٱلنُّورُۗ أَمۡ جَعَلُواْ لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ خَلَقُواْ كَخَلۡقِهِۦ فَتَشَٰبَهَ ٱلۡخَلۡقُ
عَلَيۡهِمۡۚ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ وَهُوَ ٱلۡوَٰحِدُ ٱلۡقَهَّٰرُ (16)

(14) The true call is only for Him. Those who call to others besides Him, they do not respond to their pleas at all; except like the person who stretches out his hands towards water so that it may reach his mouth whereas it will never reach. The call of the disbelievers is wasted. (15) To Allāh does all within the heavens and the earth prostrate willingly or under duress, as well as their shadows by morning and evening. (16) Say, "Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?" Say, "Allāh!" Say, "Do you then take allies besides Allāh who have no ability to help, nor harm themselves." Say, "Is he who sees equal to the blind? Or is a multitudes of darkness equal to light? Or do they ascribe such partners to Allāh who create like He creates, thereby causing the creation to be alike to them?" Say, "Allāh is the Creator of everything and He is the One, The Omnipotent."

THE EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO SUPPLICATE TO OTHERS BESIDES ALLĀH. ALL IN THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH PROSTRATE TO ALLĀH, HE IS THEIR LORD AND HAS CREATED ALL OF THEM

Allāh begins by saying, *"The true call is only for Him."* i.e. Only Allāh can be supplicated to, for only He is able to respond to the pleas of people.

"Those who call to others besides Him, they do not respond to their pleas at all..." Their false gods have no ability to do anything for themselves, so how can they help others? Allāh then cites the example of the du'ās of these people. He says that it is *"like the person who (only) stretches out his hands towards water so that it may reach his mouth whereas it will never reach. (Similarly) The call of the disbelievers is wasted."* The water has no ability to reach his mouth on its own and he will therefore never attain his objective.

Allāh says in verse 197 and 198 of Surah A'rāf, *"Those whom you call upon*

besides Him are unable to help you and cannot even help themselves. If you call them towards guidance, they cannot hear and you will think that they are looking at you, but they do not see.

"To Allāh does all within the heavens and the earth prostrate willingly or under duress, as well as their shadows by morning and evening (i.e. all the time)." According to certain commentators, the verse means that all the humans, jinn and angels in the heavens and the earth prostrate to Allāh. Many of them do so happily, but those like the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* are compelled against their wishes to do so.

Their shadows also move with them. The morning and the evening are specifically mentioned because at these times the shadows are most pronounced. However, their prostration is not confined to these two times only.

According to other commentators, the verse does not refer to literal prostration. Rather it refers to submission and yielding to Allāh. All of these creation are subservient to Allāh's decree. Of them are those who worship Allāh willingly, as well as those who do so reluctantly. Even the shadows of all of them are subservient to Allāh's will.

Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"Do you not see how your Lord spreads the shadow? If He willed, He could have made it stationary. We then appoint the sun as a sign to it and then We gradually withdraw it towards Ourselves."* [*Surah* 25, *verses* 45, 46]

"..... willingly or under duress..." Similar to this verse, Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān [*Surah 3, verse 83*], *"Do they seek a religion (D'īn) besides the religion (D'īn) of Allāh when unto Him submit all within the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him shall they all be returned?"* One should refer to the commentary of this verse for more details.

"Say, 'Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth?' (If they do not reply because of their obstinacy, then you reply.) *Say, 'Allāh!'* (Then rebuke them by saying) *Say, 'Do you then take allies besides Allāh who have no ability to help, nor harm themselves."* If this be their condition, how can help be expected from them?

THOSE WHO SEE AND THOSE WHO ARE BLIND CANNOT BE ALIKE, NEITHER CAN DARKNESS BE AKIN TO LIGHT

"Say, 'Is he who sees equal to the blind?'" The polytheist and the believer *(Mu'min)* can never be the same, just as the blind cannot be compared to a person who has sight.

"Or is a multitudes of darkness equal to light?" The *"multitudes of darkness"* refers to all types of disbelief *(kufr)*, while the single light refers to the light of Belief *(Imān)* in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. All the religions *(D'īn's)* of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* can never equate to the truth of Islām. The reason is simple. These will lead to Hell, while Islām will lead to Heaven *(Jannah)*.

Allāh says in verse 122 of Surah An'ām (*Surah 6*), *"Is he who was dead, then We granted him life and gave him a light whereby he may walk among people better than one like him who is in multiple darkness from which he shall not emerge?"*

Allāh continues to say, *"Or do they ascribe such partners to Allāh who create like He creates, thereby causing the creation to be alike to them?"* The Polytheists worship

false gods instead of Allāh. Allāh Ta'āla poses a rhetorical question to tell them that their false gods have not created any creation that can be compared to Allāh's creation. Therefore, there is no cause for them to doubt who is the real Creator.

Allāh says in another verse, *'Indeed those who you worship besides Allāh can never even create a fly, though all of them join forces in this effort."* [*Surah Hajj (22), verse 73*]

Therefore, it is established that these false gods are not able to create as Allāh does. For this reason Allāh commands that it be announced, *"Allāh is the Creator of everything and He is the One, The Omnipotent."* All are subservient to Him.

أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَّابِيًا ۚ وَمِمَّا يُوقِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَاءَ حِلْيَةٍ أَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِّثْلُهُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْحَقَّ وَالْبَاطِلَ ۚ فَأَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَاءً ۖ وَأَمَّا مَا يَنفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ (17) لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُم مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ (18)

(17) Allāh sent down rain from the sky causing the valleys to flow according to their capacity and the flowing waters carried debris that floated on its surface. And from that which you cast into fire seeking adornments and other items of worth, comes a similar debris. Thus does Allāh cite examples of the truth and falsehood. As for the debris, it disappears in vain. As for the things that benefit man, they remain upon the earth. In this manner Allāh cites examples. (18) Heaven (Jannah) is for those who are obedient to Allāh. As for those who do not obey Him, if they possessed whatever is on earth and the like thereof with it, they will certainly ransom their souls with it. For them shall be an evil reckoning and their abode shall be Hell. What an evil abode indeed.

THE EXAMPLE OF TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

In the above verse Allāh cites two examples of truth and falsehood. The first is that of the rains causing rivers to flow rapidly. The waters carry debris upon its surface. This debris is then discarded somewhere and does not benefit anyone in the least. The waters flow on and are used for various purposes that benefit creation.

The second example is of debris that is removed from metal ore (like gold and silver) when it is smelted in a furnace. After the smelting process, the pure metal remains to be utilised for various purposes, while the debris alloys are of no use.

Both these examples refer to something of benefit and something useless. Belief *(Imān)* is the beneficial aspect that will be of use to man in both the worlds. On the other hand, the debris is akin to disbelief *(kufr)*, which is useless to man in both worlds. In fact, it will earn people eternal punishment in the Hereafter. Although disbelief *(kufr)* seems vibrant like the debris flowing along with the waters, it is useless and worthless to people.

Allāh then says, *"Heaven (Jannah) is for those who are obedient to Allāh. As for those who do not obey Him* (their plight will be evil indeed. To save themselves on the Day of Judgement), *if they possessed whatever is on earth and the like there of with it, they will certainly ransom their souls with it."*

Defining their punishment, Allāh says, *"For them shall be an evil reckoning and their abode shall be Hell. What an evil abode indeed."*

One may refer to the commentaries of verse 91 of Surah Āl Imrān and of verses 36 and 37 of Surah Mā'idah for a more detailed explanation of the ransoming of souls on the day of Judgement.

۞ أَفَمَن يَعْلَمُ أَنَّمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ ٱلْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ أَعْمَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ﴿19﴾
ٱلَّذِينَ يُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَنقُضُونَ ٱلْمِيثَٰقَ ﴿20﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ أَن يُوصَلَ
وَيَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَيَخَافُونَ سُوٓءَ ٱلْحِسَابِ ﴿21﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ ٱبْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟
ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَنفَقُوا۟ مِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِٱلْحَسَنَةِ ٱلسَّيِّئَةَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى
ٱلدَّارِ ﴿22﴾ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۖ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿23﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿24﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ
يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَ ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مِيثَٰقِهِۦ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَآ أَمَرَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِۦٓ أَن يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ ۙ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوٓءُ ٱلدَّارِ ﴿25﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ
وَفَرِحُوا۟ بِٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَا فِى ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ إِلَّا مَتَٰعٌ ﴿26﴾

(19) Can the person who knows that whatever is revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, be like him who is blind? Only the people of intelligence take heed... (20) Those who fulfil the pledge taken with Allāh and do not breach the covenant. (21) Those who join that which Allāh has commanded that it be joined, who fear their Lord and dread a woeful reckoning. (22) Those who exercise patience seeking the pleasure of their Lord, establish Salāh, spend secretly and openly from that which We have provided and expel evil with good. These are the ones who shall enjoy the favourable outcome of the Hereafter. (23) Eternal gardens in which they will enter together with all those of their forefathers, spouses and progeny who are worthy. And the angels shall come to them from every door... (24)(The angels will be saying) "Peace be upon

you for the patience that you exercised. How blissful is the outcome of the Hereafter!" (25) Those who breach Allāh's pledge after ratifying it, sever that which Allāh commanded that it be joined and spread corruption on earth, theirs shall be a curse and theirs shall be misfortune in the Hereafter. (26) Allāh increases sustenance for whom He pleases and straitens. They rejoice about the life of this world whereas the life of this world is a paltry asset in comparison to the Hereafter.

THE QUALITIES AND REWARDS OF THE BELIEVER AND THE MISFORTUNE OF THOSE WHO BREACH PLEDGES

Allāh begins by saying, *"Can the person who knows that whatever is revealed to you from your Lord is the truth, be like him who is blind?"* Those who are blind to the truth are those who are unaware' of it and refuse to accept it. They can never be like those who believe. The Qur'ān is available to every person but *"Only the people of intelligence take heed."* Only they utilise their intelligence and ponder over the message of the Qur'ān.

Other people waste away their intelligence in pursuit of worldly sciences and knowledge. They fail to utilise the intelligence given by Allāh to recognise Him. They are considered to be bereft of intelligence because their intelligence causes them harm instead of good. Thereafter Allāh goes on to describe the *"people of intelligence."*

Allāh says that they are *"Those who fulfil the pledge taken with Allāh and do not breach the covenant."* The pledge referred to here is the one that Allāh took from all of mankind (as mentioned in verse 172 of Surah A'rāf) on the plain of Na'mān (*Mishkāt p. 24*). Allāh asked them all, *"Am I not your Lord?"* They all replied in the affirmative and attested to it.

All the Prophets عليهم السلام reminded man of this pledge. However, many are those who have forgotten that they accepted Allāh as their Lord. They do not adhere to Allāh's commandments and fail to abstain from the things that He has prohibited.

All Muslims have also entered into a pledge with Allāh upon their acceptance of Islām. This pledge entails that they abide by all the injunctions of Islām. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Fulfil Allāh's pledge when you have made the pledge."* [*Surah 16, verse 91*]

The second description of the *"intelligent ones"* given by Allāh is that they are *"Those who join that which Allāh has commanded that it be joined..."* This includes maintaining family ties, being cordial and good towards the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and towards all the creation of Allāh. (The discussion of maintaining family ties has passed in the commentary of verse 1 of Surah Nisā.)

The *"intelligent ones"* also *'fear their Lord and dread a woeful reckoning."* They fear that their reckoning on the Day of Judgement may not be difficult. Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), We will erect the scales of justice and no soul will be oppressed in the least. Even if a deed is equal to the weight of a mustard seed, We shall present it. We suffice as Reckoners."* [*Surah 21, verse 47*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that they once asked the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم what the meaning was of an easy reckoning. He replied, "An easy reckoning means that the record of deeds will merely be glanced at and the person forgiven. O Ayshah! The one whose record is scrutinized will be destroyed." [*Mishkāt p. 447*]

The sixth quality of the *"intelligent ones"* is that they are *"Those who exercise patience seeking the pleasure of their Lord..."* Patience (sabr) is of three types. The first type entails patiently persevering difficulties, the second entails carrying out all Allāh's commandments, and the third involves abstinence from disobeying Allāh.

The system of this world is such that every person must suffer hardships. The difference between the disbeliever *(kāfir)* and the Muslim in this regard is that the Muslim exercises patience for Allāh's pleasure. Therefore, he is rewarded.

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"The patient ones shall be granted their reward without reservation."* [*Surah 39, verse 10*]

Patience that is exercised at the time the calamity strikes will be rewarded, not the patience exercised afterwards, since this is inevitable. A detailed explanation of this topic is given under the commentary of verse 153 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"O you who believe, seek assistance with patience and Salāh."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the truly afflicted person is he who is deprived of reward when afflicted by a calamity. This is the person who does not exercise patience *(sabr)*, or does so without the intention of pleasing Allāh.

The seventh quality is that they *"establish Salāh* (with all its requisites. The eighth is that they) *spend secretly and openly from that which We have provided..."* This includes obligatory *(Fardh)*, compulsory *(Wājib)* and optional *(Nafl)* charity. At times, it will be better to spend secretly, while at other times, it will be best to do so publicly. A person should weigh the advantages of either situation. The criterion is that the spending be solely for Allāh's pleasure, not for fame and ostentation.

The ninth quality is that they *"expel evil with good."* The good people have always been harassed by the evil elements of society. Although it is permissible to avenge oneself in proportion to the injury inflicted, it would be best to forgive the aggressor without vengeance. Even nobler than this is to behave graciously towards the aggressor.

Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"The retribution for an evil is an evil the like there of as for the one who pardons and makes amends, his reward will be with Allāh. Verily, Allāh does not like the oppressors."* [*Surah 42, verse 40*]

Allāh has also mentioned in another verse, *'Indeed, the one who is patient and forgives, then this is truly from resolute acts."* [*Surah verse*]

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah *"Good and evil cannot be equal. Resist with that which is best, and the one between yourself and whom there was enmity, will instantly become like your bosom friend."* [*Surah 41, verse 34*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a sterling example of such behaviour. When he conquered Makkah, he announced to all those who harmed him in the past, "There shall be no reproach on you today. May Allāh forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام asked Allāh, 'Which of Your bondsmen are most honoured in Your sight?' Allāh replied, 'He who forgives despite possessing the ability to avenge himself."' [*Mishkāt p. 434*]

After describing the *"intelligent ones"* Allāh mentions their bliss in the Hereafter. He says, *"These are the ones who shall enjoy the favourable outcome of the Hereafter. Eternal gardens in which they will enter together with all those of their forefathers, spouses and progeny who are worthy."* Because of His grace Allāh will allow the relatives of a person reach the stages he has reached so that he may receive additional joy. "Ruhul Ma'āni" mentions that grandmothers and great grandmothers are also included in the word *'forefathers."*

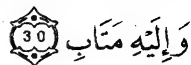
In addition to all of the above, *"the angels shall come to them from every door (saying), 'Peace be upon you for the patience that you exercised. How blissful is the outcome of the Hereafter!"'*

After mentioning the merriment of the good people, Allāh then makes mention of the others. He says, *"Those who breach Allāh's pledge after ratifying it, sever that which Allāh commanded that it be joined and spread corruption on earth. Theirs shall be a curse and theirs shall be misfortune in the Hereafter."*

THE FOOLISHNESS OF REJOICING IN THE PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD

"Allāh increases sustenance for whom He pleases and straitens." Abundance of worldly wealth does not necessarily mean that Allāh likes a person, nor does a lack of wealth mean that Allāh dislikes one.

"They [the disbelievers (kuffār)] rejoice about the life of this world whereas the life of this world is a paltry asset in comparison to the Hereafter." The disbelievers *(kuffār)* are deprived of Belief *(Imān)* because of their wealth and are thus doomed to the eternal punishment of the Hereafter. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Whoever is saved from the fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful. The life of this world is but an object of deceit." [Surah 3, verse 185]*

وَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِىٓ إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أَنَابَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ ٱلْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحُسْنُ مَـَٔابٍ ﴿٢٩﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ فِىٓ أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهَآ أُمَمٌ لِّتَتْلُوَا۟ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ

(27) The disbelievers say, "Why is a sign not revealed to him from his Lord?" Say, "Allāh sends astray whom He wills and guides towards Him whoever turns to Him." (28) Those who believe and whose hearts are contented with the remembrance of Allāh. Behold! Hearts are contented with the remembrance of Allāh. (29) Those who believe and do good deeds, for them shall be good fortune and a grand abode. (30) In a like manner have We sent you among a nation before which many nations have passed, so that you may recite to them that which We have revealed to you, while they disbelieve in The Most Merciful. Say, "He is my Lord. There is no deity besides Him. Only on Him do I rely and towards Him do I Turn.

HEARTS ARE CONTENTED BY REMEMBERING ALLĀH

The Qur'ān constantly refutes the absurd demand of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* for a miracle which they themselves stipulated. In the above verse as well Allāh does the same. He says, *"The disbelievers say, 'Why is a sign (miracle) not revealed to him from his Lord?"* Miracles are from Allāh and He determines when they will be shown by the Holy Prophet عليه السلام. The greatest miracle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the Qur'ān. However, the disbelievers *(kuffār)* refused to accept this and many of his other miracles as well.

Allāh knew that if a miracle of their own request was shown to them, they will also not accept it. They will therefore remain astray. For this reason Allāh says, *"Say, 'Allāh sends astray whom He wills and guides towards Him whoever turns to Him."'* Only when they decide to turn to Allāh, will He guide them aright.

Thereafter Allāh describes who are meant by those who turn to Him. Allāh say that they are *"Those who believe and whose hearts are contented with the remembrance of Allāh. Behold! Hearts are contented with the remembrance of Allāh."* The remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* is great solace for the heart of believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Their hearts become pleased when Allāh is mentioned.

"Those who believe and do good deeds, for them shall be good fortune and a grand abode." These people will be blessed with a pleasant life in this world and in the Hereafter they will receive the best of bounties in Heaven *(Jannah)*.

At this juncture, the author of Ma'alimut Tanzīl has raised an interesting question. He writes that while the above verse tells us that the hearts of believers *(Mu'minīn)* receive contentment by Allāh's mention, the third verse of Surah Anfāl (*Surah 8*) states, *"The believers are those whose hearts tremble when Allāh is mentioned..."* Therefore, how can contentment and trembling occur simultaneously?

He replies by writing that their hearts tremble when Allāh's warnings and reprimands are mentioned, while they are contented when rewards and favours are mentioned. In my humble opinion, this question does not arise at all. Fear (resulting in trembling) is a branch of Belief *(Imān)*, while Belief *(Imān)* is contentment in itself. The person who is not content that his beliefs are the truth cannot possess Belief *(Imān)*. When he does not have any Belief *(Imān)*, how can

he fear warnings and reprimands.

Thereafter, Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"In a like manner have We sent you among a nation before which many nations have passed, so that you may recite to them that which We have revealed to you, while they disbelieve in The Most Merciful."* They are ungrateful towards the great bounty of the Qur'ān and choose to disbelieve it.

Then Allāh commands that the announcement be made, *"Say, 'He is my Lord. There is no deity besides Him. Only on Him do I rely and towards Him do I turn."*

وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْءَانًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ ٱلْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ ۗ بَل لِّلَّهِ ٱلْأَمْرُ
جَمِيعًا ۗ أَفَلَمْ يَا۟يْـَٔسِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَن لَّوْ يَشَآءُ ٱللَّهُ لَهَدَى ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلَا يَزَالُ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ تُصِيبُهُم بِمَا صَنَعُوا۟ قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِّن دَارِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِىَ وَعْدُ ٱللَّهِ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿31﴾

(31) If the Qur'ān was such that mountains are displaced by it, or the earth is split asunder by it, or the dead are made to speak by it (then too they will not believe). However, all matters rest with Allāh. Have the believers not become despondent when they know that if Allāh willed, He would have guided all of mankind? Because of their evil deeds, some calamity will always afflict the disbelievers, or descend close to their homes until Allāh's promise comes. Undoubtedly Allāh does not break His promise.

THE REJECTERS WILL NOT BELIEVE EVEN THOUGH THE MIRACLES THEY DEMAND ARE SHOWN TO THEM

Ma'alimut Tanzīl (*v. 2 p. 19*) reports that Abdullāh bin Umayya and Abu Jahl once said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if he wished that they follow him, he should use the Qur'ān to cause the mountains of Makkah to be displaced and sent to another place so that Makkah could be larger. They also requested that he cause the rivers and springs to gush forth from the earth so that they may be able to farm.

In addition, they mentioned to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had told them how the mountains were subjugated for Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and the wind made subservient for Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. They therefore asked that the wind be brought to their service so that they be enabled to travel to Shām for trade and return the same day.

They added that he told them how Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام could cause the dead to speak. Therefore, they said, he should also cause one of their forefathers to rise from the grave so that they could ask him whether Islām was the true religion *(D'īn)*. They said that since his rank was no less than that of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, he should ask Allāh for all of these miracles, after which they would believe in him. In reply to this request, Allāh revealed the above verse viz. *"If the Qur'ān was*

such that mountains are displaced thereby, or the earth is split asunder thereby, or the dead are made to speak thereby (then too they will not believe)."

This is similar to verse 111 of Surah An'ām where Allāh says, *"Certainly if We send the angels down to them or the dead speak to them or We gather everything before them, they will not believe except if Allāh wills, but most of them are ignorant."*

Allāh goes on to say, *"However, all matters rest with Allāh."* Everything happens according to His will. None can force Him to accede to their requests. He will guide whomsoever He wishes.

The author of Ma'alimut Tanzīl reports that the Sahaba رضی الله عنه desired that these requests of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* be fulfilled so that they become Muslims. In reply to this, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Have the believers not become despondent when they know that if Allāh willed, He would have guided all of mankind?"*

Thereafter, Allāh says, *"Because of their evil deeds, some calamity will always afflict the disbelievers, or descend close to their homes..."* Allāh did not fulfil their requests because Allāh knew that they never intended to believe. Then too, Allāh is not constrained to pander to anyone's wishes. Allāh treats people according to their actions. It is for this reason that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* constantly suffer various calamities and disasters. If calamities do not afflict them directly, it falls close to them so that they may take heed.

This series of calamities shall take place *"until Allāh's promise comes."* Certain commentators mention that this refers to the conquest of Makkah. Others are of the opinion that it refers to death, while others state that it means the Day of Judgement. Allāh then reminds one and all, *"Undoubtedly Allāh does not break His promise."*

People should, therefore, always take a lesson from any calamitiy that befall them or their surrounding areas. They should realise that these are warnings from Allāh so that they correct their actions.

وَلَقَدِ ٱسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَأَمْلَيْتُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ
﴿٣٢﴾ أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَآئِمٌ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۗ وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ شُرَكَآءَ قُلْ سَمُّوهُمْ ۚ أَمْ تُنَبِّـُٔونَهُۥ
بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ أَم بِظَٰهِرٍ مِّنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ ۗ بَلْ زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مَكْرُهُمْ وَصُدُّوا۟
عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ لَّهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ
ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَشَقُّ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَاقٍ ﴿٣٤﴾ ۞ مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ ۖ وَّعُقْبَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ
ٱلنَّارُ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمِنَ ٱلْأَحْزَابِ مَن يُنكِرُ
بَعْضَهُۥ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ ٱللَّهَ وَلَآ أُشْرِكَ بِهِۦٓ ۚ إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُوا۟ وَإِلَيْهِ مَـَٔابِ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ

أَنزَلْنَٰهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا ۚ وَلَئِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَآءَهُم بَعْدَ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ مِن
وَلِيٍّ وَلَا وَاقٍ ﴿37﴾

(32) Numerous messengers before you were mocked at, but I granted respite to disbelievers, and then I seized them. How (severe) was My retribution? (33) Can He Who is aware of the deeds of every soul (be like him who is not like this)? And they ascribe partners to Allāh. Say, "Name them." Are you informing Allāh of something that He has no knowledge of on earth, or merely by apparent words? However, the plots of the disbelievers have been beautified for them and they forbid from the path. There is no guide for him whom Allāh has sent astray. (34) They shall suffer punishment in this world, and the punishment of the Hereafter is worse. There shall be no saviour for them from Allāh. (35) The condition of the Heaven (Jannah) that is promised to the pious is that of rivers flowing beneath it. The fruits and shade of Heaven (Jannah) will be permanent. This is the outcome of those who adopt piety (taqwa), while the outcome of the disbelievers shall be the Fire. (36) Those whom We have given the Book rejoice at what has been revealed to you, while there are some from the groups who reject a part thereof. Say, "I have been commanded to worship only Allāh and not to ascribe partners to Him. To Him do I call and to Him will I return." (37) Thus have We revealed it as a special Arabic command. Surely if you follow their whims after knowledge has come to you, you shall have no helper nor saviour against Allāh.

CONSOLATION TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم, THE EVIL PLIGHT OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* R AND THE PROMISE OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* FOR THE PIOUS

In the first of these verses, Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"Numerous messengers before you were mocked at..."* Therefore, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the only one suffering the jeers of the disbelievers *(kuffār).* Allāh did not punish these people immediately. Rather, Allāh says, *"I granted respite to disbelievers and (they increased in their rebellion) then I seized them.* (One can well imagine) *How (severe) was My retribution?"*

In this verse Allāh offers solace to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and encourages him to persevere like all the previous Prophets عليهم السلام. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* can never escape Allāh's punishment when it comes to them.

"Can He Who is aware of the deeds of every soul (be like him who is not like this)? And they ascribe partners to Allāh." The false gods made by the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the polytheists can never be like Allāh. How can they then be regarded as His partners?

"Say, 'Name them." The polytheists are asked to state exactly who these partners are and to furnish details about their positions and capabilities.

"Are you informing Allāh of something that He has no knowledge of on earth..." In Allāh's complete knowledge, He has no partner on earth. Ascribing partners to Him is tantamount to telling Allāh that He does have such partners, but He is (Allāh forbid) unaware of them.

".....or merely by apparent words?" i.e. Are your claims of other gods substantiated or are they mere words. These gods can never be established by mere words and have, therefore, no reality.

"However, the plots of the disbelievers have been beautified for them and they forbid from the path." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the "*plots*" refer to disbelief *(kufr)*, polytheism *(shirk)* and considering evil to be good. These *'plots"* have caused them to be averse to the right path of guidance. However, *"There is no guide for him whom Allāh has sent astray."*

Thereafter Allāh sounds a grave warning to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. He says, *"They shall suffer punishment in this world, and the punishment of the Hereafter is worse. There shall be no saviour for them from Allāh."*

In contrast to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, Allāh then mentions the condition of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh says, *"The condition of the Heaven (Jannah) that is promised to the pious is that of rivers flowing beneath it. The fruits and shade of Heaven (Jannah) will be permanent."* The people of Heaven *(Jannah)* may have the fruits whenever they please until eternity.

The shade of Heaven *(Jannah)* will also be permanent because there will be no rising and setting of the sun. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"We shall enter them into abundant shade."* Says Allāh in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"(They will be) in extensive shade, flowing water and an abundance of fruit that will not come to an end and will not be restricted."* [*Surah* 56, *verses* 30-33]

Concluding the subject, Allāh says, *"This is the outcome of those who adopt taqwa, while the outcome of the disbelievers shall be the Fire."*

Thereafter Allāh praises those people of the book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* who accepted Islām. He says, *"Those whom We have given the Book rejoice at what has been revealed to you..."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that these were 40 Christians of Najrān, 8 from Yemen and 32 from Abysinnia *(Ethiopia)*. There were also a few Jews who accepted Islām, like Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضى الله عنه.

"...while there are some from the groups [of the people of book (Ahlul Kitāb)] who reject a part of it." Some of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* accepted only those parts of the Qur'ān that appealed to them, while rejecting the rest.

"Say, 'I have been commanded to worship only Allāh and not to ascribe partners to Him. To Him do I call and to Him will I return." i.e. I will continue to adhere to my religion *(D'īn)* whether the disbelievers *(kuffār)* like it or not.

THE QUR'ĀN IS A SPECIAL COMMAND IN ARABIC

"Thus have We revealed it as special Arabic command." This verse refutes those people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* who rejected the Qur'ān on the basis that some of its laws differed with those of the previous scriptures. Allāh tells them that just as the previous scriptures were revealed according to the circumstances and the natures of the previous people, so too is the Qur'ān revealed according to the state of affairs prevailing at the time of revelation and the people to whom it is addressed.

All the previous religion's *(D'īn's)* and scriptures differed in their laws and

languages. Some contained laws that were subsequently abrogated, while others contained laws that were strange to others. Despite all of this, the previous nations never condemned the others. Therefore, since the Qur'ān is revealed in Arabic and contains laws that are strange to them, the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* have no cause to reject it on this basis.

"Surely if you follow their whims after knowledge has come to you, you shall have no helper nor saviour against Allāh." Although this verse seems to be addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is actually an appeal to all Muslims. If one accepts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as the addressee, then the verse will be a supposition i.e. If he was ever to succumb to their whims, he would have no ally against Allāh. However, it was impossible for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to contradict the commands of Allāh and follow the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَذُرِّيَّةً وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ
إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ (38) يَمْحُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ
الْكِتَابِ (39) وَإِن مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ
وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ (40) أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا
مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (41) وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلَّهِ الْمَكْرُ
جَمِيعًا يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفَّارُ لِمَنْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ (42) وَيَقُولُ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ
عِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ (43)

(38) Verily, We have sent many messengers before you and We granted them wives and progenies. A messenger is not able to produce a sign without Allāh's order. Every period had written commands. (39) Allāh effaces what He wills and establishes (what He wills). With Him is the Mother of Books. (40) If We were to show you some of the promises that We made to them or we were to claim your soul, then propagation will be your responsibility and reckoning Ours. (41) Do they not see that We have been reducing the earth from its borders. Allāh commands and there is none to avert His command. And He is swift in reckoning. (42) Those before them have plotted, but to Allāh does all plotting belong. He knows what every soul earns, and the disbelievers will soon come to know to whom belongs the outcome of the Hereafter. (43) The disbelievers say, "You are not a messenger." Say, "Allāh is sufficient as witness between us, and so are those who possess the knowledge of the Book."

ALL THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام BEFORE THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم HAD WIVES AND CHILDREN, AND NONE WAS ABLE TO PRODUCE A MIRACLE WITHOUT ALLĀH'S ORDER

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 13 p.168*) reports that the Jews objected against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying that he cannot be a Prophet because of his many wives. They maintained that a Prophet does not have the chance to care for so many wives. In reply to this objection, Allāh revealed the verse saying, *"Verily, We have sent many messengers before you and We granted them wives and progenies."*

Having wives and children is not against the concept of the Prophethood, neither is it detrimental to it. The Jews were well aware of the fact that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had many wives, yet they did not object against them. They objected to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم only because they refused to accept his message and they intended to mislead the polytheists as well. The reply given in the Qur'ān answers people of all times who may raise the same objection.

The purpose of the Prophets عليهم السلام was to guide mankind in all aspects of their lives. It was therefore necessary that they also marry and have children, so that people could be guided about how they should behave in the same situation. In this manner, the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام were practical, and not merely theoretical.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as the Holy Prophet to the whole of mankind until the Day of Judgement. Therefore, his teachings were meant to be far reaching, offering guidance in every matter governing a person's life. The pure wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have explained fine details of his life that could only be noticed by a wife. In this manner, the Ummah were informed of a vast number facts to lead them on the way to salvation.

By way of the many proofs and miracles, the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been clearly established. Therefore, one cannot object to the number of wives that he had since a Prophet of Allāh will never do anything contrary to Allāh's commands.

"A messenger is not able to produce a sign without Allāh's order." According to many commentators, the word *"sign"* refers to miracles. The fact that any Prophet did not produce a miracle that was demanded by the people does not mean that he was not a Prophet. Allāh is not constrained to accede to these demands, especially since these people ask without the intention to believe, and since so many other proofs attest to the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Other commentators have mentioned that *"sign"* refers to laws of the Shari'ah. People cannot demand that the Holy Prophet formulate such laws that comply with the previous Shari'ah. They cannot also question him when certain laws are repealed. Only Allāh reserves the right to enforce laws and regulations as He pleases.

Allāh says in Surah Yunus, *"It does not behove me to alter it of my own accord. I follow only what has been revealed to me."* [*Surah 10, verse 15*]

"Every period had written commands." Every nation has laws according to their respective situations and times. In the same way, this Ummah also has the same.

"Allāh effaces what He wills and establishes." Of the many interpretation quoted by the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni", one is that Allāh repeals whatever laws He wills, and retains those that He wishes to retain.

It has been quoted in Ma'alimut Tanzīl (*v. 3 p.22*) that the verse means that Allāh effaces the sins of people because of their repentance *(Taubah)*, and records good deeds in place of them. According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, the good and evil deeds of people are effaced from the account of deeds recorded by the angels.

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that, on the night of Qadr, Allāh effaces the names of those who are to die in the ensuing year, whereas the names of the others are retained (on the list of the living). Other interpretations have also been tendered, but they are inappropriate.

"With Him is the Mother of Books." This refers to the Lawhul Mahfūz *(Protected Tablet)* which contains everything pertaining to the past, present and the future. None is allowed access to it and all matters are decreed according to its contents.

"If We were to show you some of the promises (of punishment) *that We made to them or we were to claim your soul* (then it would be of no consequence to you, Your task will remain the same i.e.), *then propagation will be your responsibility and reckoning Ours."*

Commentators mention that the punishment referred to in the verse came to the polytheists when they were defeated at Badr and many of them were killed. Thereafter, the Muslims conquered Makkah, when some of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were slain and others became Muslims.

"Do they not see that We have been reducing the earth from its borders." Some commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* should take heed of the fact that their territory was gradually being reduced to make way for the Muslims. The Muslims were dominating territory after territory in a short while because the sway of the oppressors never lasts long and the pious must eventually dominate. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Qatāda رحمة الله عليه and others have forwarded this interpretation.

Other commentators mention that Allāh had gradually reduced the habitable land area of the earth by destroying the oppressive nations. People to come should take a lesson from these facts and not succumb to the same follies.

"Allāh commands and there is none to avert His command. And He is Swift in reckoning." When Allāh decides to punish a nation, none will be able to avert the punishment from them.

"Those before them have plotted (against the Prophets عليهم السلام *and the believers (Mu'minīn), but to Allāh does all plotting belong."* No plot can overpower Allāh's plan.

"He knows what every soul earns..." Allāh is aware of all the attacks made upon the Muslims and will soon punish the aggressors. When this will happen, *"the disbelievers will soon come to know to whom belongs the outcome of the Hereafter."* In the Hereafter the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will learn that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* were indeed the successful ones.

"The disbelievers say, 'You are not a messenger.' Say, 'Allāh is sufficient as Witness between us, and so are those who possess the knowledge of the Book." The rejection of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will not affect the Prophethood of Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh is a sufficient witness. The people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* are also well aware of the fact that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was the final messenger to man because they learnt this from their scriptures.

سورة ابرهيم

Makkan	Surah Ibrahīm	Verses 52

[(Prophet) Ibrahim] XIV

الٓرۚ كِتَٰبٌ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ إِلَيۡكَ لِتُخۡرِجَ ٱلنَّاسَ مِنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ بِإِذۡنِ رَبِّهِمۡ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلۡعَزِيزِ ٱلۡحَمِيدِ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّذِي لَهُۥ مَا فِي ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِۗ وَوَيۡلٞ لِّلۡكَٰفِرِينَ مِنۡ عَذَابٖ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسۡتَحِبُّونَ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا عَلَى ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَبۡغُونَهَا عِوَجًاۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ فِي ضَلَٰلِۢ بَعِيدٖ ﴿٣﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Rā. This is a Book that We revealed to you to remove people from the multitudes of darkness, taking them towards light, by the command of your Lord to the path of The Mighty, The One Worthy of praise. (2) Allāh is He to Whom belongs all that is within the heavens and the earth. Woe be to the disbelievers by way of a severe punishment. (3) (They are) those who prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter, who forbid (others) from Allāh's path and who seek crookedness in it. These people are far astray.

ALLĀH REVEALED THE QUR'ĀN SO THAT PEOPLE MAY BE REMOVED FROM DARKNESS AND BROUGHT TO LIGHT ALLĀH IS MIGHTY AND THE MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Surah Ibrahīm begins with the verse that declares, *"This is a* (magnificent) *Book that We revealed to you to remove people from the multitudes of darkness, taking them towards light, by the command of your Lord..."*

Thereafter, Allāh describes the *"light"* as *"the path of The Mighty, The One Worthy of praise."* The word *"praise"* refers to all praiseworthy attributes. These are all applicable to Allāh.

Thereafter, Allāh speaks of the control that He exercises over the creation. He says, *"Allāh is He to Whom belongs all that is within the heavens and the earth."* Allāh is the Creator and Supreme Master of everything. Those who deny this actually deny their Creator and Master. Therefore, they are warned, *"Woe be to the disbelievers by way of a severe punishment."*

THE QUALITIES OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

Allāh then enumerates three traits of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. The first is that they are *"Those who prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter..."* It is this negligence of the Hereafter that causes the disbelievers *(kuffār)* to remain as they are.

The second trait is that they *"forbid (others) from Allāh's path..."* Neither do they accept, nor do they allow others to accept. The third trait is that they *"seek crookedness in it."* They are ever vigilant to expose any defect that they hope to find in the religion *(D'īn)* of Islām. They then use this to raise absurd objections against the religion *(D'īn)*.

Because of these despicable traits, Allāh declares, *"These people are far astray."*

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِۦ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَشَآءُ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

(4) We sent every messenger with the language of his nation so that he may clearly explain to them. Then Allāh sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. He is The Mighty, The Wise.

THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام ALL SPOKE THE LANGUAGE OF THEIR NATIONS

Allāh mentions an extremely important point in this verse viz. *"We sent every messenger with the language of his nation so that he may clearly explain to them."* Allāh caused the entire human race to issue forth from Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام. They were then divided into various tribes and sects, all having different colours and languages.

Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"And from His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the variation of your languages and colours. There are certainly signs therein for those who have knowledge."* [*Surah 30, verse 22*]

The greatest instrument used by the Prophets عليهم السلام to propagate and teach their nations was their language. It was therefore imperative that every one of the Prophets عليهم السلام spoke the language of the nation to which he was sent.

Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام lived in a place close to Babylon, but migrated to Shām. There he married one of the women of the area and learnt their language.

It was then that he declared the Prophethood. Although he was not from the area, he preached to the people in their own language so that they were able to understand.

The verse does not imply that the Prophets عليهم السلام did not know any other languages. They could have known many languages, but they preached to the people in the language that the people understood.

ALTHOUGH SAYYIDINA MUHAMMAD صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS SENT TO MANKIND AT LARGE, THE QUR'ĀN, THE ADHĀN AND SALĀH ARE ALL IN ARABIC

As mentioned by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a hadith of Bukhari, he was sent to the whole of mankind, unlike other Prophets عليهم السلام. However, since he was sent among the Arabs first, he was from them, spoke their language and the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic as well.

Arabic is a language like no other. The eloquence and articulation of Arabic is not found in any other language. The words of Arabic are not difficult like those of English and Sanskrit and are easy to learn. These are some of the reasons why Arabic was chosen as the language of the Qur'ān.

Since the Ummah of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم comprises diversely varying groups, it was necessary to unite them on one common language, the obvious choice being Arabic. The Qur'ān was to be learnt and memorised for centuries to come. This was only possible if it was restricted to one language, the most suitable for this purpose being Arabic.

People were to receive rewards for the mere recitation of the Qur'ān. Therefore it had to be in a language that was easy for all to learn to recite. Again the obvious choice is Arabic. Even little children quickly master its recitation and millions of them have memorised the Qur'ān.

The language of the Qur'ān also has to be easy to pronounce. The letters of Arabic (although some require practice) are simple to pronounce. This will be realised by comparison with the letters of other languages, some of which can only be pronounced by the natives of these languages. For all of the above reasons, the Adhān and Salāh also have to be rendered in Arabic.

Another reason is that Muslims have to come into contact with the Arabs by virtue of the Hajj which has to be performed in Makkah. Therefore, Muslims have to be acquainted with their language.

The duty of the Prophets عليهم السلام was to propagate the message. They were not entrusted with compelling people to accept. Therefore Allāh says that after the Prophets عليهم السلام have passed the message on *"Then Allāh sends astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. He is The Mighty', The Wise."*

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْ أَخْرِجْ قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى
النُّورِ وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ

﴿٥﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ أَنجَاكُم مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ وَيُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِي ذَٰلِكُم بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

(5) Indeed we sent Mūsa with Our signs (instructing him), "Remove, your people from the multitudes of darkness, taking them into the light. And remind them of the days of Allāh. Verily there are signs in this for every person who exercises extreme patience and gratitude." (6) (Recall the time) when Mūsa told his people, "Recall Allāh's bounties on you when He rescued you from the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun), who were inflicting a severe punishment on you by slaughtering your sons and keeping your daughters alive. In this was a great trial from your Lord.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام IS SENT TO THE BANI ISRA'ĪL AND REMINDS THEM OF ALLĀH' S FAVOURS ON THEM

After arriving in Egypt during the time of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, the Bani Isra'īl were subjected to extreme torture for approximately 400 years by the Egyptian Copts. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام lived among the Egyptians for 30 years and with the people of Madyan for ten years. He understood the language of the Bani Isra'īl as well as that of the Egyptians. For this reason Allāh sent him as a the Holy Prophet to the Bani Isrā'īl as well as to the people of Egypt.

The people of Fir'aun were polytheist and they influenced the Bani Isra'īl also wth theire practices. As a result of this, the bani Isra'īl easily took to worshipping the calf and once when *"they came across a nation who were devoted to their idols, they said, 'O Mūsa, make for us a god like how they have gods.*

For this reason, Allāh instructed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"Remove your people from the multitudes of darkness [disbelief (kufr), polytheism (shirk) and sin], taking them into the light."*

"And remind them of the days of Allāh." All days belong to Allāh because He created them all. However, the *"days of Allāh"* refer to the changes and revolutions that took place throughout history. Allāh caused great kings and their dynasties to collapse. Some cannot even be located. Allāh told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to remind the Bani Isra'īl of these so that they may take heed and mend their ways.

Other commentators have interpreted the *"days of Allāh"* to mean the bounties and favours of Allāh.

"Verily there are signs in it for every person who exercises extreme patience and gratitude." Those people who recall the afflictions suffered by the previous nations will find it easy to bear the hardships and difficulties that afflict them. Such people will also be inclined to show gratitude to Allāh for any bounty that He confers on them.

Allāh reminds the Jews about the time *"When Mūsa told his people, 'Recall*

Allāh's bounties on you when He rescued you from the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun), who were inflicting a severe punishment on you by slaughtering your sons and keeping your daughters alive." According to Allāh's command, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام addressed the Bani Isra'īl and reminded them of the past. He began by reminding them of the greatest favour that Allāh had bestowed upon them, which was their delivery from the torture of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* would preserve the lives of the women of the Bani Isra'īl so that they could serve him and his nation. They would then be subjected to the most arduous of menial tasks.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام continued to remind them, *"In this was great trial from your Lord."* Another translation of the Arabic word "balā" (besides 'trial') is "favour." According to this translation, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام would be referring to the salvation of the Bani Isrā'īl from Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his followers.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾ وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ إِن تَكْفُرُوا أَنتُمْ وَمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

(7) When your Lord announced, "If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more, and if you are ungrateful, then indeed My punishment is severe.
(8) Mūsa said, "If you people and all the people on the earth are ungrateful, then verily Allāh is Independent, Worthy of all praise."

ALLĀH'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WILL GRANT MORE FAVOURS BECAUSE OF GRATITUDE AND THAT INGRATITUDE WILL RESULT IN SEVERE PUNISHMENT

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has written that after Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام reminded the Bani Isra'īl of Allāh's bounties upon them, he also told them, *"When your Lord announced, 'If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more, and if you are ungrateful, then indeed My punishment is severe."*

Gratitude for Allāh's favours should be expressed in words and in actions. Gratitude by way of actions means that one's deeds must conform to Allāh's injunctions, and that one must always abstain from disobeying Allāh in any way. Just as the grateful people receive an increase in Allāh's bounties, the ingrates will have their bounties depleted.

Surah Nahl mentions the episode of a certain town, the inhabitants of which were extremely fortunate in every sense. However, they were deprived of all of this on account of their ingratitude to Allāh. Verses 15 to 21 of Surah Saba (*Surah* 34) also recounts a similar scenario which occurred to the people of Saba.

"Mūsa said, 'If you people and all the people on the earth are ungrateful, then verily Allāh is Independent, Worthy of all praise.

By being grateful, a person benefits only himself. Allāh does not require the

gratitude, nor the praise of anyone. People harm only themselves by not carrying out these actions.

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُا۟ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ ۛ وَٱلَّذِينَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ۛ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۚ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَرَدُّوٓا۟ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِىٓ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُم بِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَفِى شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَنَآ إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٩﴾ ۞ قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِى ٱللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرَكُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ أَنتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ ءَابَآؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾ قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِن نَّحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَآ أَن نَّأْتِيَكُم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَىٰنَا سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَآ ءَاذَيْتُمُونَا ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

(9) Have the incidents of those before you not come to you? The incidents of the nation of Nūh, the Ād, the Thamud, and those after them? Only Allāh knows them. Their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they placed their hands in their mouths and said, "Verily we do not believe in what you have been sent with. We are in such a doubt regarding that towards which you call us, that it has cast us into uncertainty." (10) Their messengers said, "Are you in doubt regarding Allāh, Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth? He calls you to forgive your sins and to grant you respite until the appointed term." They said, "You are but mere humans like ourselves, You intend to forbid us from what our forefathers used to worship. So produce a clear proof!" (11) Their messengers told them, "We are but mere humans like yourselves, but Allāh favours whomsoever He wills from His bondsmen. We are unable to produce a proof for you without Allāh's order. Only on Allāh should the believers rely." (12) "Why should we not rely on Allāh, when He has guided us to His paths? We shall definitely exercise patience on the difficulties that you cause to us. Only in Allāh should those who have trust place their trust."

THE OBSTINACY OF THE PREVIOUS NATIONS, THE PROPAGATION OF THE MESSENGERS AND THE ABSURD QUESTIONS RAISED BY THEIR NATIONS

The Quraysh of Makkah refused to accept the truth and made all types of absurd remarks. In reply, Allāh revealed the above verses. Allāh says, *"Have the incidents of those before you not come to you? The incidents of the nation of Nūh, the Ād,*

the Thamūd, and those after them? Only Allāh knows them." The polytheists of Makkah were well aware of the incidents. These were also mentioned to them in the Qur'ān and they heard of them from the Jews and the Christians. On their travels they even passed by the ruins of these civilizations. However, they failed to take heed of the lessons they presented.

Thereafter Allāh describes the condition of the previous people. He says, *"Their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they placed their hands in their mouths and said, 'Verily we do not believe in what you have been sent with. We are in such a doubt regarding that towards which you call us, that it has cast us into uncertainty."*

When the people rejected the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, *"Their messengers said, 'Are you in doubt regarding Allāh, Who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth* (Do you not see His magnificence in these creations)? *He calls you to forgive your sins and to grant you respite until the appointed term."*

When the people were unable to reply to the Prophets عليهم السلام, they began to refute their apostleship. Therefore, *"They said, 'You are but mere humans like ourselves, You intend to forbid us from what our forefathers used to worship. So produce a clear proof* (a miracle)!"'

"Their messengers told them, 'We are but mere humans like yourselves (This does not disprove our apostleship), *but Allāh favours whomsoever He wills from His bondsmen* (by making them the Holy Prophets). *We are unable to produce a proof for you* (i.e. the miracles that you demand) *without Allāh's order. Only in Allāh should the believers rely."*

In addition, the Prophets عليهم السلام said, *"Why should we not rely on Allāh, when He has guided us to His paths? We shall definitely exercise patience on the difficulties that you cause to us. Only in Allāh should those who have trust place their trust."* It is learnt from this that those who propagate the truth should expect opposition and difficulties from people, but they should persevere through all of this and pin their reliance in Allāh.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۖ
فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ (13) وَلَنُسْكِنَنَّكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مِن بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ (14) وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ
عَنِيدٍ (15) مِّن وَرَائِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِن مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ (16) يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ
يُسِيغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ ۖ وَمِن وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ
غَلِيظٌ (17)

(13) The disbelievers said to their messengers, "We shall certainly exile you from our land, otherwise you should return to our religion (D'īn)." Their Lord sent

revelation to them, "We shall surely destroy the oppressors... (14) .And We shall definitely settle you in the land after them. This is for him who fears standing before Me and who fears My warning." (15) They sought a decision and every obstinate tyrant was unsuccessful. (16) Before him is Hell and he will be given puss as a drink. (17) He will drink it in sips and it will not go down his throat. Death will come to him from all sides, but he will not die. Before him will be severe punishment.

THE PREVIOUS NATIONS THREATEN TO EXILE THEIR MESSENGERS AND THE SEVERE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* could no longer reply to the Prophets عليهم السلام, they threatened to expel them and their followers from the town unless they forsook their religion *(D'īn)* to join the ranks of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* once more. Even today the disbelievers *(kuffār)* sound the same threat to the Muslims.

As was already mentioned in verse 30 of Surah Anfāl (*Surah 8*), the polytheists of Makkah also contemplated exiling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from Makkah. The Sahabah رضى الله عنه were forced to migrate first to Abysinnia, and then eventually to Madinah. Later, the battle of Badr caused a serious blow to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, and then, six years later, the Muslims conquered Makkah. Now the Muslims could live in peace in their native land. The same transpired with the previous Prophets عليهم السلام and their followers. They were victors at the end of the day.

IT IS CONTRARY TO THE QUR'ĀN FOR MUSLIMS TO AWAIT ALLĀH'S HELP WHILE THEY THEMSELVES ARE SINFUL

After promising His help to the believers *(Mu'minīn)* against the oppressors, Allāh says, *"This* (promise) *is for him who fears standing before Me* (on the Day of Judgement) *and who fears My warning."* Allāh will fulfil His promise of assistance to those people who are convinced about the Day of Judgement and about the warnings sounded to them by the Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures.

When a person fears these things, then he will automatically abstain from sin. Therefore, this promise will not be for those who are sinful. Nowadays Muslims are generally steeped in sin. They flagrantly violate Allāh's commandments and pay no heed to the Obligations *(Farāidh)* and Compulsories *(Wājibāt)*. Their business practices contradict the laws of Shari'ah and they infringe the rights of other people. This being the case, they cannot expect Allāh's help in their struggle against the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān with regard to the battle of Uhud, *"Do not lose courage and do not be grieved for you shall be elevated if you are indeed believers."* The condition for elevation here is belief *(Imān)*, which makes demands that have to be fulfilled.

In another verse, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told his people, *"Seek Allāh's assistance and exercise patience. Surely the earth belongs to Allāh. He grants it to whomsoever He wills, and success is for the pious."*

Allāh mentions in Surah Hūd, after the salvation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام

and his followers, *'Indeed the final outcome will be in favour of the pious."* [*Surah 11, verse 49*]

"They sought a decision and every obstinate tyrant was unsuccessful." Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the Prophets عليهم السلام sought Allāh's decision to assist them, after which the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were destroyed. This is substantiated by the verse in Surah A'rāf where Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام made the following supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh after he was threatened with expulsion from the town. He said, *"O our Lord! Decide between us and our people with the truth, for You are the best of Deciders."* [*Surah 7, verse 89*]

According to other commentators, the verse means that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* sought a decision from Allāh. After growing weary of the Holy Prophet's preaching, they submitted to Allāh to decide the matter by sending His punishment. The people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام said, *"So bring forth what you promise us if you are of the truthful ones."* [*Surah Hūd (11), verse 32*]

The nation of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام said, *"So cause a piece of the sky to fall on us if you are from the truthful ones."* The Quraysh said, *"Oh our Lord! Hurry with our share* (of punishment) *before the Day of Reckoning."* The Quraysh also said, *"When they said, 'O Allāh! If this* (Islām) *really is the truth from You, then shower on us stones from the skies, or afflict us with a painful punishment."*

All of these people did not have faith in the warnings of the Prophets عليهم السلام, but made the above requests mockingly. As a result, they suffered Allāh's punishment in this world, and will surely receive much worse in the Hereafter.

Describing their punishment in the Hereafter, Allāh says, *"Before him is Hell and he will be given puss as a drink. He will drink it in sips and it will not go down his throat."*

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made the following comment about the verse *"he will be given puss as a drink. He will drink it in sips..."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When the drink of puss will be brought close to the mouth of the person of Hell, he will be repulsed. As it will be brought even closer, it will scorch his face and the skin of his face will fall off When he drinks it, his intestines will be ripped apart and emerge from his anus."* Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the following verses:

"....those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink, which will tear their innards to shreds."

"If they beseech help, they will be helped with water that is like the residue of burnt oil and will scorch their faces. A terrible drink indeed!" [*Mishkāt p. 503*]

Further describing the plight of the person in Hell, Allāh says, *"Death will come to him from all sides, but he will not die."* Every type of punishment will be sufficient to kill a person, yet he will not die because the punishment is meant to be eternal. Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"Hell, where he shall neither live nor die."* Verse of Surah Al A'lā states, *"He will not die there, nor will he live."*

"Before him will be severe punishment." The punishments will never cease. One punishment will always be followed by another. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"For those who disbelieve and forbid from Allāh's path, We shall add punishment to their*

punishment because of the corruption that they caused." [Surah 16, verse 88]

مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ ۖ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ ۖ لَّا
يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿18﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ
خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿19﴾ وَمَا
ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿20﴾ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا فَقَالَ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا
كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّغْنُونَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ قَالُوا لَوْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ
لَهَدَيْنَاكُمْ ۖ سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجَزِعْنَا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿21﴾

(18) The example of the actions of those who disbelieve in their Lord is like that of ashes that are blown away by a wind on a stormy day. They have absolutely no control of what they earn. This is a distant deviation. (19) Do you not see that Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth? If He wills, He could remove you and bring a new creation... (20) This is not at all difficult for Allāh. (21) They will all enter the presence of Allāh. Then the weak ones will say to the proud ones, "Indeed we were your followers, so are you able to avert some of Allāh's punishment from us?" They will reply, "If Allāh had guided us, we would have guided you. It makes no difference whether we vent our anxiety or we exercise patience. We have no escape.

THE DEEDS OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* WILL BE WASTED AND THE DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE LEADERS AND THEIR FOLLOWERS ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

Allāh informs us in the first of the above verses that all the seemingly good deeds of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* (like charity, kindness, etc) will be wasted to them on the day of Judgement. The example of this is like that of ashes that are swept away by an extremely severe wind. Nothing is left to indicate that it once existed.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this verses is a reply to those who question the punishment mentioned in the forgoing verses. They ask why will the disbelievers *(kuffār)* suffer these torments when they also carried out good deeds in the world.

Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"We will then turn to their deeds and reduce it to scattered dust."* [*Surah 25, verse 23*]

Allāh then says, *"Do you not see that Allāh has created the heavens and the earth with the truth?" i.e.* Allāh has created them with perfect wisdom. All belong to Him and He may deal with them as He pleases.

"If He wills, He could remove you and bring a new creation. This is not at all difficult for Allāh." Allāh can do as He pleases and none can alter His plans.

Thereafter, Allāh describes a scene on the Day of Judgement. Allāh says, *"They will all enter in the presence of Allāh. Then* (after all the wrongdoers are condemned to Hell) *the weak ones will say to the proud ones* (i.e. their leaders and superiors), *'Indeed we were your followers* (we hearkened to you people instead of the Prophets عليهم السلام), *so are you able to avert some of Allāh's punishment from us?"*

To this plea, the leaders will reply, *"If Allāh had guided us* (to escape from the punishment), *we would have guided you* (to it). *It makes no difference whether we vent our anxiety or we exercise patience. We have no escape."*

Also recounting this altercation between the people of Hell, Allāh says in Surah Mu'min, *"The haughty ones will say, 'We are all together in the Fire. Allāh has already passed judgement between His bondsmen.'"* [*Surah 40, verse 48*]

It has already passed in verses 166 and 167 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah* 2) Surah Mu'min that the leaders will exonerate themselves from their followers. Verse 38 and 39 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) has mentioned how the inmates of Hell will curse each other and verses 31 to 33 of Surah Saba (*Surah 34*) also quotes the feud between people on the Day of Judgement.

وَقَالَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ ٱلْأَمْرُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ ٱلْحَقِّ وَوَعَدتُّكُمْ
فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لِيَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن سُلْطَٰنٍ إِلَّآ أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَٱسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي ۖ فَلَا
تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَكُم ۖ مَّآ أَنَا۠ بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُصْرِخِيَّ ۖ إِنِّي
كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (22)
وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ (23)

(22) When the matter will be decided, Satan (Shaytān) will say, "Allāh had certainly made a true promise to you. I also made promises to you, but I breached them. The only control that I exercised over you was that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot be a helper to you, nor can you be helpers to me. I am absolved of your action of ascribing me as a partner from before. There shall be a torturous punishment for the oppressors. (23) Those who believe and do good deeds will be entered into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever by the order of their Lord. Their greeting there shall be 'Salām'.

AFTER DECISIONS ARE PASSED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT (*QIYĀMAH*), SATAN (*SHAYTĀN*) SHALL EXONERATE HIMSELF FROM HIS FOLLOWERS

Although Satan (*Shaytān*) is responsible for leading many people astray, he will put the blame on them on the Day of Judgement. Allāh says in the above verses, *"When the matter will be decided, Satan (Shaytān) will say, 'Allāh had certainly*

made a true promise to you. I also made promises to you, but I breached them.'" Saying this, he will reprimand them for listening to his promises instead of those that Allāh made to them via the Anbiya عليهم السلام.

He will also say, *"The only control that I exercised over you was that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves."* Satan *(Shaytān)* never forced them to do as they did and to falsify the Prophets عليهم السلام. He only led them on and they fell headlong for his guile.

He will say to them, *'I cannot be a helper to you, nor can you be helpers to me. I am absolved of your action of ascribing me as a partner from before. There shall be a torturous punishment for the oppressors."*

It is the extreme grace of Allāh that He has informed man in this very world about the trickery and double standards of Satan *(Shaytān)*. The intelligent person should contemplate about his personal situation. If he is on the wrong path, he should think who set him upon it. He will clearly see that it was the same Satan *(Shaytān)* who will absolve himself of blame on the Day of Judgement. In this manner, one can correct one's actions.

THE REWARDS OF THE BELIEVERS

"Those who believe and do good deeds will be entered into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they shall abide forever by the order of their Lord. Their greeting there shall be 'Salām'." They will enjoy the bliss of Heaven *(Jannah)*. They will greet each other with supplications of peace (Salām). Even the angels will greet them with Salām. A detailed explanation of the Salām in Heaven *(Jannah)* was given in the verse 10 of Surah Yunus (*Surah 10*), where Allāh says, *"Their call therein shall be, 'O Allāh! You are. Pure!' and their greeting will be Salām. Their final call shall be, 'All praise be for Allāh, the Lord of the universe."*

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا
فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ ﴿24﴾ تُؤْتِيٓ أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍۭ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿25﴾ وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ ٱجْتُثَّتْ مِن فَوْقِ
ٱلْأَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِن قَرَارٍ ﴿26﴾ يُثَبِّتُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱلْقَوْلِ ٱلثَّابِتِ فِي ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ
ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِي ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ ۖ وَيُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ۚ وَيَفْعَلُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿27﴾

(24) Do you not see how Allāh cites the example of the pure word as a pure tree, the roots of which are set firm and the branches of which reach into the sky... (25) It bears fruit every season by the command of its Lord. Allāh cites examples for people so that they may reflect. (26) And the example of the evil word is like that of a miserable tree that is uprooted from the ground, having no stability. (27) Allāh keeps those who believe steadfast by a firm word in this world and in the Hereafter. And He sends the oppressors astray. Allāh does as He pleases.

THE SIMILITUDE OF THE GOOD AND THE EVIL WORD

The commentators mention that the *"pure word"* refers to the Kalimah of Islām viz. "Lā ilāha IllAllāh". On the other hand, the *"evil word"* refers to the words of disbelief *(kufr)*.

Allāh says, *"Do you not see how Allāh cites the example of the pure word as a pure tree, the roots of which are set firm and the branches of which reach into the sky. It bears fruit every season by the command of its Lord. Allāh cites examples for people so that they may reflect.* "Tirmidhi narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the *"pure tree"* is the date palm. The roots of "Lā ilāha IllAllāh" are set deeply within the heart of the believer *(Mu'min)* and his good deeds reach into the heavens. This denotes that Allāh accepts them.

This is similar to the verse in Surah Fātir, where Allāh says, *"The Pure Word climbs unto Him, propelled by good deeds."* The date palm is steady and firm on the ground. It bears fruit regularly, thereby benefiting man constantly.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"And the example of the evil word is like that of a miserable tree that is uprooted from the ground, having no stability."* The narration of Tirmidhi continues to quote the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying that the *"miserable tree"* is the wild gourd, which is extremely bitter. The taste as well as the odour are miserable and eating it will cause various harms to the body.

This tree is such that it has no stability and can be uprooted without any effort. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the wild gourd is referred to as a tree in keeping with the fact that the Kalimah was depicted as a tree. In reality, the wild gourd is actually a creeper.

The word and statements of disbelief *(kufr)* have no stability compared to the Kalimah of Islām. It does not benefit anyone, but rather causes untold harm. Allāh will not accept the actions of the disbeliever *(kāfir)*. Therefore, the example of disbelief *(kufr)* is cited as the wild gourd because it has no branches.

ALLĀH WILL KEEP THE BELIEVERS STEADFAST BY THE "FIRM WORD"

"Allāh keeps those who believe steadfast by a firm word in this world and in the Hereafter." The *'firm word"* refers to the Kalimah viz. "Lā ilāha IllAllāh." The meaning of the verse is that Allāh will safeguard the believers *(Mu'minīn)* from the attacks and guile of Satan *(Shaytān)* until their dying moments.

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When the Muslim is questioned in the grave, he will testify, ***'Lā ilāha IllAllāh Muhammadur Rasulullāh.'*** This is what Allāh refers to when He mentions, *"Allāh keeps those who believe steadfast by a firm word in this world and in the Hereafter."* [Bukhari]

Sayyidina Uthmān رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had completed the burial of any Muslim, he would tell the Sahabah رضى الله عنه, "Pray for the forgiveness of your brother and then pray for his steadfastness, because he is now going to be questioned." [*Abu Dawūd*]

"And He sends the oppressors astray. Allāh does as He pleases." The author

of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the verse refers to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Allāh sends them astray in this world because they have opted to alter the perfect beliefs with which they were born; they followed the deviant ones, rejected the proofs of the Prophets عليهم السلام and showed an aversion to the truth.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that when the disbeliever *(kāfir)* and the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)* will be questioned regarding the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he will reply, "I do not know. I used to say what the people said."

According to other narrations, he will exclaim, "O! I do not know!" when asked every one of the three questions viz. Who is his Lord, What was his religion *(D'īn)*, and what has he to say about this person viz. the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?

THE PUNISHMENT IN THE GRAVE IS PROVEN FROM THE QUR'ĀN AND THE AHADĪTH

The belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah is that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and some sinful believers *(Mu'minīn)* will be punished in the grave. The Sahabah رضى الله عنه immediately believed in whatever was revealed in the Qur'ān and told to them by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Nowadays, however, people tend to doubt these sources. The enemies of Islām also exert themselves to cast all types of doubts in the minds of the Muslims. As a result of this, many Muslims today refute the belief that people will be punished or rewarded in the graves.

The above verse and its commentary, as mentioned in the hadith of Bukhari, confirm the belief in the punishment of the grave. Also confirming the same is the verse in Surah Ghāfir [also called Surah Mu'min], where Allāh says, *"They will be presented before the Fire morning and evening. And, on the day that judgment day (Qiyāmah) will take place, (they will be told) 'Enter the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) into the worst of punishments.'"* [*Surah 40, verse 46*]

Allāh says in Surah Nūh, *"They were drowned because of their sins and then entered into the Fire."* [*Surah 71, verse 25*]

These verses clearly mention the punishment in the grave. Many Ahadīth also confirm the fact. In fact, so many Ahadīth mention the punishment in the grave that it is impossible that they could all have been fabricated.

It is indeed unfortunate that some so-called Muslims refute this belief because they claim that it cannot be seen. They refute the verse of the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on these grounds, yet they are prepared to accept the theories of scientists and researchers without witnessing these.

"Shortly the oppressors will come to know to which place they will return.

۞ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى ٱلَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا۟ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا۟ قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ ٱلْبَوَارِ ﴿٢٨﴾ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْقَرَارُ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَجَعَلُوا۟ لِلَّهِ أَندَادًا لِّيُضِلُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۗ قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا۟

فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ (30) قُل لِّعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُنفِقُوا
مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خِلَالٌ (31) اللَّهُ
الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ
رِزْقًا لَّكُمْ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْأَنْهَارَ
(32) وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ (33)
وَآتَاكُم مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ
الْإِنسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ (34)

(28) Have you not seen those who changed the bounty of Allāh with ingratitude and conveyed their nation to the Home of Destruction... (29) ..... to Hell, where they shall enter. What an evil place to be! (30) They ascribed partners to Allāh to lead astray from His path. Say, "Enjoy! Your destination shall be the Fire!" (31) Tell My bondsmen who believe that they should establish Salāh and spend of what We have provided for them secretly and openly before a day arrives when there shall be no trade, nor any friendship. (32) Allāh is He Who created the heavens and the earth and sends rain from the sky, thereby extracting fruits as sustenance for you. He subjugated the ships for you so that they may travel over the oceans by His command. And He subjugated the rivers for you. (33) He subjugated the sun and the moon for you, the two being constantly in motion. He also subjugated the day and the night for you. (34) And He grants you whatever you ask Him for. If you try to count Allāh's bounties, you will never be able to do so. Indeed, man is extremely unjust and very ungrateful.

THE MISFORTUNE OF THOSE WHO ARE UNGRATEFUL FOR ALLĀH'S FAVOURS

In the first of the above verses Allāh speaks of those who show ingratitude to Allāh. He says, *"Have you not seen those who changed the bounty of Allāh with ingratitude..."* Certain commentators mention that the verse refers to the Polytheists of Makkah. Allāh granted them their needs and a haven of safety. Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Have We not granted them a peaceful Haram, to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from Us?"* [*Surah 28, verse* 57]

In addition to this, Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to them with the Qur'ān in their own language. However, they were ungrateful and even forced the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم out of their town.

Their leaders *"conveyed their nation to the Home of Destruction, to Hell, where they shall enter. What an evil place to be!"*

Further describing them, Allāh says, *"They ascribed partners to Allāh to lead astray from His path."* Not only did they lead themselves astray, they also lead others astray. They are informed regarding their plight. Allāh says, *"Say, 'Enjoy!*

Your destination shall be the Fire!"'

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* THERE WILL BE NO TRADE NOR ANY FRIENDSHIP

"Tell My bondsmen who believe that they should establish Salāh and spend of what We have provided for' them secretly and openly..." The advantage of giving charity in secret is that one does not become proud, while that of spending openly is that others are encouraged by it.

Allāh encourages people to excel in these deeds *"before a day arrives when there shall be no trade, nor any friendship."* On the Day of Judgement, no person will be able to ransom his soul, nor will his misleading friends be of any assistance to him. None shall recognise his friends on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Of course, the only exception will be as Allāh says in another verse, *"Friends will be enemies on that day, save for those with piety (taqwa)."* [*Surah Zukhruf (43), verse 67*]

ALLĀH'S GREAT BOUNTIES AND MAN'S INGRATITUDE

Allāh now mentions the things that He has created, that are apparent before all, and which benefit all. Allāh says:

(1) "Allāh is He Who created the heavens and the earth..."

(2) ". . . and sends rain from the sky, thereby extracting fruits as sustenance for you." The rains and the growth of fruit and crops are by Allāh's command only.

(3) "He subjugated the ships for you so that they may travel over the oceans by His command. "Allāh taught man the skill of ship-building and navigating the seas. By virtue of these ships man is able to transport large loads across from continent to continent.

(4) "And He subjugated the rivers for you." If it were not for these rivers and streams, man would have to rely only on the rain to irrigate their crops, otherwise do so with great difficulty. In either event, he would have been greatly pained. These rivers also provide drinking water and allow transportation.

(5) "He subjugated the sun and the moon for you, the two being constantly in motion." The benefits of the sun are innumerable and researchers have enumerated many of them. The moon illuminates many a dark night and its soft glow is said to give colour to fruits.

(6) "He subjugated the day and the night for you." The night affords rest, while people are able to work during the day. The alternation and varying lengths of the day and the night are signs that denote the greatness of Allāh. One cannot imagine what chaos would reign if man experienced only night or only day.

After mentioning all of these bounties, Allāh sums up by saying, *"And He grants you whatever you ask Him for. If you try to count Allāh's bounties, you will never be able to do so."* There are innumerable bounties that man is not even aware of. Within the human body there are a countless number of blood vessels, nerves

and tissues. Man, despite his exhaustive research is still unable to discover all the various functions and details of the human body.

Besides his own body, man enjoys many other bounties in the form of food and the various other creations of Allāh that are of use to him. The vegetation, animals, fish, trees, flowers, plants and the multitudes of other creation are all too numerous to even imagine. All these are from Allāh. Even the hairs upon the body are such a bounty that none can reproduce properly. When a person finishes recounting the benefits of every individual bounty of Allāh, he will still have countless others to be grateful for.

"Indeed, man is extremely unjust and very ungrateful." Man is unjust in that he utilises all of Allāh's bounties upon him and still disobeys Allāh. He even uses the same bounties to sin against Allāh.

Man does not express sufficient gratitude to Allāh and many are those who say that whatever they have is because of their own efforts. In this way they actually reject Allāh's favours to them. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Few of My bondsmen are thankful."* [*Surah 34, verse 13*]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ رَبِّ ٱجْعَلْ هَٰذَا ٱلْبَلَدَ ءَامِنًا وَٱجْنُبْنِى وَبَنِىَّ أَن نَّعْبُدَ ٱلْأَصْنَامَ ﴿٣٥﴾ رَبِّ إِنَّهُنَّ أَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ فَمَن تَبِعَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ مِنِّى ۖ وَمَنْ عَصَانِى فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ رَّبَّنَآ إِنِّىٓ أَسْكَنتُ مِن ذُرِّيَّتِى بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِى زَرْعٍ عِندَ بَيْتِكَ ٱلْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ فَٱجْعَلْ أَفْـِٔدَةً مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ تَهْوِىٓ إِلَيْهِمْ وَٱرْزُقْهُم مِّنَ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

(35) When Ibrahīm said, "O my Lord.' Make this city peaceful and safeguard my children and myself from worshipping idols." (36) "O my Lord.' Indeed these idols have misled many people. So whosoever will follow me, then he is certainly from me. And whosoever will disobey me, then surely You are Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." (37) "O our Lord! I have settled my children in a valley that cannot be cultivated, close to Your sacred house. O our Lord! So that they establish Salāh, so cause some hearts of people to be inclined towards them. And provide for them fruits for their sustenance so that they may be grateful."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام SETTLES HIS FAMILY CLOSE TO ALLĀH'S HOUSE AND PRAYS THAT ALLĀH SAFEGUARDS THEM FROM POLYTHEISM *(SHIRK)*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام migrated from his homeland when the people refused to accept his message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and wanted to kill him. He left for Syria *(Shām)* with his wife Sarah, who was his cousin. En route a king attempted to seduce her, but Allāh caused him to become paralysed each time he advanced towards her. Eventually he set her free and gave her a slave

woman as a gift. This slave woman was called Hājara, and Sarah عليه السلام gave her as a concubine to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام became the father of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام from Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was born to Sayyidah Hājar عليها السلام. Allāh instructed Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to leave Sayyidah Hājara and the infant Isma'īl عليه السلام in Makkah. When he brought them there, he made the du'ā, *"O my Lord! Make this city peaceful and safeguard my children and myself from worshipping idols."*

He then prayed, *"O my Lord! Indeed these idols have misled many people. So whosoever will follow me, then he is certainly from me. And whosoever will disobey me, then surely You are Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīmعليه السلام then supplicated, *"O our Lord! I have settled my children in a valley that cannot be cultivated, close to Your sacred house. O our Lord! So that they establish Salāh, so cause some hearts of people to be inclined towards them."* In this du'ā he prayed that Allāh guide his progeny to be steadfast upon religion *(D'īn)*. Since Salāh is the most important act after Belief *(Imān)*, he mentioned it only. Thereby, he meant all other acts of religion *(D'īn)* as well.

After praying for their spiritual safeguarding, he then prayed for their well being in this worldly existence. He said, *"And provide for them fruits for their sustenance so that they may be grateful."*

Allāh accepted these du'ās. Allāh made Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and his progeny believers and leaders of others. Others were attracted to Makkah and Allāh provided an abundance of provisions. The produce of the entire world comes to Makkah and the millions of pilgrims *(Hujjaj)* and people performing Umrah benefit from it.

Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Have We not granted them a peaceful Haram, to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from Us?"* [*Surah 28, verse* 57]

The fertile town of Tā'if, close to Makkah has always supplied the people of Makkah with their necessary food, in addition to all the imported foods. There can scarcely be a fruit on earth that has not been taken to Makkah.

Ulama mention that the word *"fruit"* refers not only to the fruit that is borne on a tree. They say that the fruit (produced article) of every machine and industry are also implied. In this way every manufactured article also reaches Makkah.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام left his wife with a bag of dates and a waterbag. As he turned to leave, Sayyidah Hājara عليها السلام asked him where was he going, but he did not reply. Upon the third query, she asked him whether he was acting according to Allāh's command. When he replied in the affirmative, she declared that Allāh would not allow them to be destroyed in that event.

Eventually, their supply of food and water was exhausted. The incident is well known that she ran seven times to and fro between,Safa and Marwa in search of water. Then Allāh caused the well of Zam Zam to gush forth for them. Thereafter, the tribe of Jurhum arrived on the scene and settled there. They were the first realization of *"cause some hearts of people to be inclined towards them."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام used to visit his son who eventually married. Thereafter, father and son built the Ka'ba together at the site where it stood before being raised to the heavens when the floods struck during the time of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Because of the fact that the place where he left his wife and child was close to the site of the Ka'ba, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made the du'ā, *"O our Lord! I have settled my children in a valley that cannot be cultivated, close to Your sacred house."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made the above prayers to Allāh at a place from where he could see the site of the Ka'ba, but not his wife and child. Although he knew that the Ka'ba was to be built there, he did not know the exact location. Therefore, Allāh showed him the location, as mentioned in a verse of Surah Hajj where Allāh says, *"When We showed Ibrahīm the location of the house..."* [*Surah 22, verse 26*]

The progeny of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام remained believers for some time. However, they also succumbed to the plot of Satan *(Shaytān)* and took to idolatry. They even placed their idols in the Ka'ba itself. Eventually, Allāh sent Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم who was from their lineage, to them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then eradicated polytheism *(shirk)*.

THE CONCERN THAT ONE'S CHILDREN ARE CONSCIOUS OF SALĀH IS A QUALITY OF THE HOLY PROPHETS

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام included the phrase in his supplication *(du'ā)*, *"O our Lord! So that they establish Salāh..."* This denotes that he was concerned that his offspring pay heed to their Salāh. Later in verse 40 he also makes the supplication *(du'ā)*, *"O my Lord! Make me one who establishes Salāh, and my progeny as well."* He was concerned about his own Salāh, as well as that of his later generations.

Nowadays people are careless about the spiritual condition of their children. They do not care to enrol them in the institutions of religion *(D'īn)*, but are particular to see that they receive secular education. They care for the worldly well being of their children, but are destroying them for the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed that Allāh makes his progeny spiritual leaders, as indicated by the supplication *(du'ā)* for people's hearts to be inclined towards them. As a result, Allāh made His final Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

"And provide for them fruits for their sustenance so that they may be grateful." This supplication *(du'ā)* teaches us that it is not contrary to piety that a person prays for the worldly well being of his children. Of course, priority must be given to their spiritual well being. It is also learnt that gratitude should be paramount in one's mind. This should be practised and taught to one's children as well.

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّكَ تَعۡلَمُ مَا نُخۡفِي وَمَا نُعۡلِنُۗ وَمَا يَخۡفَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ مِن شَيۡءٖ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ

(38) "O our Lord! Indeed You know what we conceal and what we disclose. Nothing in the heavens and the earth is hidden from Allāh." (39) "All praise be to Allāh, Who has gifted me with Isma'īl and Is'hāq despite old age. Undoubtedly, my Lord hears all prayers." (40) "O my Lord! Make me one who establishes Salāh, and my progeny as well. O my Lord! Accept my prayer." (41) "Our Lord! Forgive me, my parents and the believers the day when reckoning shall commence."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام THANKS ALLĀH FOR GRANTING HIM CHILDREN AT AN OLD AGE AND PRAYS THAT ALLĀH MAKES HIM AND HIS PROGENY ESTABLISH SALĀH

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made the supplication *(du'ā), "O our Lord! Indeed You know what we conceal and what we disclose. Nothing in the heavens and the earth is hidden from Allāh."* Just as Allāh is aware of the actions of man, He also has perfect knowledge of their intentions.

Thereafter, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام expresses his gratitude to Allāh, when he says, *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has gifted me with Isma'īl and Is'hāq despite old age. Undoubtedly, my Lord hears all prayers."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام referred to the du'ā (*prayer*) he made to Allāh, when he previously prayed to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Grant me a son from amongst the pious."* [*Surah Sāffāt (37), verse 100*]

He continued to supplicate, *"O my Lord! Make me one who establishes Salāh, and my progeny as well. O my Lord! Accept my prayer. O our Lord! Forgive me, my parents and the believers the day when reckoning shall commence."*

At this juncture, the question arises that how could Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام pray for his parents when they were idolators? The detailed reply to this question was discussed in the commentary of verse 114 of Surah Taubah (*Surah 9*), where Allāh says, *"Ibrahīm only sought forgiveness for his father because of a promise that he had made to him. When it became clear to him that his father was Allāh's enemy, he exonerated himself from him."*

He prayed for his father's forgiveness while he still hoped that his father would become a believer *(Mu'min)*. However, when this hope was lost, he desisted from praying for him. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also prays for his mother in the above verse. If she were not a believer, then the same reply will apply to her as was given with regard to his father.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَٰفِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ

ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ ﴿٤٢﴾ مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِى رُءُوسِهِمْ لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ ۖ وَأَفْـِٔدَتُهُمْ هَوَآءٌ ﴿٤٣﴾
وَأَنذِرِ ٱلنَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ فَيَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ أَخِّرْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ
نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَكَ وَنَتَّبِعِ ٱلرُّسُلَ ۗ أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوٓا۟ أَقْسَمْتُم مِّن قَبْلُ مَا لَكُم مِّن
زَوَالٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ وَسَكَنتُمْ فِى مَسَـٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ
كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ وَضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَقَدْ مَكَرُوا۟ مَكْرَهُمْ وَعِندَ
ٱللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَإِن كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ مِنْهُ ٱلْجِبَالُ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهِۦ رُسُلَهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ ذُو ٱنتِقَامٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

(42) Never think that Allāh is unaware of what the oppressors perpetrate. He is only granting them respite until a day when gazes will be fixed upwards... (43) They will running with their heads fixed upwards, their gazes never returning to them. And their hearts will be empty. (44) Warn people of a day when punishment will afflict them, and the oppressors will say, "O our Lord! Grant us respite for a short while. We shall accept Your call and follow the messengers." "Did you not swear on oath before this that you shall never be displaced (from this world)?" (45) You lived in the homes of those who oppressed themselves and it was clear to you how We dealt with them. And We even cited examples for you. (46) They plotted their plots, but their plots rest with Allāh, even though mountains could be displaced by their plots. (47) Never think that the Allāh will breach His promise to His messengers. Indeed Allāh is Mighty, Able to take vengeance.

A SCENE OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THE OPPRESSORS WILL REQUEST LEAVE WHEN THEY SEE THE PUNISHMENT

Despite the tireless efforts of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, many of the polytheists refused to accept his message and, because they were not immediately punished, they asked why Allāh's punishment was not afflicting them for their disbelief. This attitude was also influencing others. Therefore, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Never think that Allāh is unaware of what the oppressors perpetrate. He is only granting them respite until a day* (the Day of Judgement) *when gazes will be fixed upwards. They will running with their heads fixed upwards, their gazes never returning to them. And their hearts will be empty."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the above verse is addressed to all of mankind, even though it may appear that it is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because it is not possible that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could have thought this.

Allāh then describes the scene of judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* further when He says, *"Warn people of a day when punishment will afflict them, and the oppressors will say, 'O our Lord! Grant us respite for a short while. We shall accept Your call and follow*

the messengers.'

The reply will be given thus, *"Did you not swear on oath before this* (i.e. in the world) *that you shall never be displaced* (from this world)?" When these people were given the message of Islām and told about judgment day *(Qiyāmah),* they refused to believe and swore that they would never leave this world. They thought that they would never be resurrected.

Although the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام was sufficient for people to take heed, yet Allāh also showed. them various signs by way of the previous nations. Reminding them of this on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah),* Allāh will tell them, *"You lived in the homes of those who oppressed themselves and it was clear to you how We dealt with them. And We even cited examples for you."* Despite all of this, they still refused to accept. They will therefore not be granted further respite.

Allāh continues to say, *"They plotted their plots, but their plots rest with Allāh, even though mountains could be displaced by their plots."* The disbelievers *(kuffār)* made extremely elaborate plots to harm the Prophets عليهم السلام and the believers *(Mu'minīn).* They exhausted their resources in these plots, but Allāh still caused them to fail.

Allāh states further, *"Never think that the Allāh will breach His promise to His messengers."* Allāh has made the promise in Surah Ghāfir that *"We shall definitely assist Our messengers and those who believe in this worldly life, as well as on the Day when witnesses will stand* (i.e. on the Day of Judgement)." [*Surah 40, verse 51*]

Allāh is perfectly capable of assisting them because *"Indeed Allāh is Mighty, Able to take vengeance."*

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ ٱلْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ ۖ وَبَرَزُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلْوَٰحِدِ ٱلْقَهَّارِ (48) وَتَرَى
ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقَرَّنِينَ فِى ٱلْأَصْفَادِ (49) سَرَابِيلُهُم مِّن قَطِرَانٍ وَتَغْشَىٰ وُجُوهَهُمُ
ٱلنَّارُ (50) لِيَجْزِىَ ٱللَّهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ (51) هَٰذَا بَلَٰغٌ
لِّلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنذَرُوا۟ بِهِۦ وَلِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ وَلِيَذَّكَّرَ أُو۟لُوا۟ ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ (52)

(48) The day when the earth will be changed into another earth, and the skies (will also be changed). They will then present themselves before Allāh, the One, the Powerful. (49) On that day you will see the criminals shackled together in fetters. (50) Their garments will be of tar and the Fire will cover their faces. (51) So that Allāh may punish every soul for what it had earned. Indeed Allāh is swift in reckoning. (52) This is a message for people so that they are warned by it and so that they know that He is but One deity, and so that the intelligent ones take heed.

THE EARTH AND THE SKIES WILL BE CHANGED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THE SINNERS WILL BE IN A MOST MISERABLE CONDITION

Allāh says, *"The day when the earth will be changed into another earth, and the*

skies (will also be changed)." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that both the substance and the qualities of the sky and earth will be changed on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. He quotes from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that there will be certain additions and some omissions made to the earth. He says that the hills, mountains, depressions, trees and other things will be removed so that the earth becomes flat like a piece of leather. He adds that the sky will be changed in a manner that the sun, moon and stars will all be removed.

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"They ask you about the mountains. Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them leaving the earth as a barren plain on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions."* [*Surah 20, verses 105-107*]

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"They have not revered Allāh as he deserves to be revered, whereas the entire earth will be in His grasp on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) and the skies will be folded in His right hand. He is Pure and Exalted above all that they ascribe as partners to Him."* [*Surah 39, verse 67*]

Says Allāh in Surah Anbiya, *"The day when We will fold the skies like the folding of written scrolls. As We initiated the first creation, We shall return it. This is a binding promise upon Us. We are undoubtedly the Ones Who can do."* [*Surah 21, verse 104*]

A verse in Surah Hāqa reads, *"When the trumpet will be blown once and the earth and mountains lifted and both will at once be shattered to pieces. On that day the occurrence shall transpire. The sky will be rent asunder and will be frail on that day."* [*Surah 69, verses 13-16*]

Allāh says in Surah Ma'ārij, *"The day when the sky will be like the burnt residue of oil and the mountains like flakes of wool."* [*Surah 70, verses 8, 9*]

He says in Surah Takwīr, *"When the sky will be opened."* [*Surah 81, verse 11*]

In a verse of Surah Inshiqāq, Allāh says, *"When the sky will be rent asunder. It will hearken to its Lord and rightly should. When the earth will be stretched out and casting out whatever is within her, will become empty. It will hearken to its Lord and should rightly do so."* [*Surah 84. verses 1-5*]

Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgement, people will be gathered on a white plain, the colour of which will be tinted brown to look like bread dough. There will not be any signs on it." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The earth will be made into baked bread on the Day of Judgement. The Great Allāh will toss it about like how you toss about your bread on a journey. This earth will be the first thing presented to the people of Jannah to eat."* [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reported that she enquired from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as to where people will be on *"The day when the earth will be changed into another earth, and the skies."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that everyone will be on the bridge of Sirāt.

While the above verses and Ahadīth denote that the qualities of the earth will be changed, the last hadith of Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها denotes that the very substance of the earth will be changed.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" quotes Ibn Ambāri رحمة الله عليه as saying that the sky will be changed constantly. It will be folded, appear as the burnt residue of oil and even appear like red hide.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the earth will be white on the Day of Judgement, as if it is plated with moonlight. He said that no blood would have been spilled on it and sin committed on it.

The possibility exists that the earth will also undergo various transformations like the sky. Initially its qualities will be changed [as mentioned by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه]. Then its substance will be changed after it has testified against people [as mentioned in verse 4 of Surah Zilzāl (Surah 99)].

Allāh continues to say, *"They will then present themselves before Allāh, the One, the Powerful."* They will all appear to be judged.

Thereafter Allāh describes the plight of the sinners. He says, *"On that day you will see the criminals shackled together in fetters."* All those who shared the same beliefs of disbelief *(kufr)* will be shackled together because they were allies to each other in the world.

"Their garments will be of tar..." The Arabic word *"Qatirān"* (translated as "tar") is actually the sap of a particular tree. It is applied to the rash of camels, causing the rash to burn out. This is similar to the practice of applying sulphur to soothe a rash. This 'Qatirān' is extremely flammable and stings the skin.

Therefore, the bodies of the sinners will be coated with this so that the fire of Hell will burn them more rapidly. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that 'Qatirān' refers to molten copper.

Sayyidina Abu Mālik Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If the woman who screams and wails upon the death of a person does not repent before her death, she will be resurrected on the Day of Judgement with a garment of Qatirān and a garment of rash." (This Qatirān will cause her rash to become unbearable). [*Muslim*]

".....and the Fire will cover their faces." Although the fire will consume their entire bodies, the face is specifically mentioned because it is the pride of one's body. Surah Humaza says that the fire will *"reach their hearts."* Here the pride of the inner self is specifically mentioned.

All this will be inflicted upon the disbelievers *(kuffār)* *"So that Allāh may punish every soul for what it had earned. Indeed Allāh is swift in reckoning."* Although the reckoning will be swift, people will think that their wait is endless because they will not be able to relax in between because of their apprehension. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 13 p. 358*]

"This is a message for people so that they are warned by it and so that they know that He is but One deity, and so that the intelligent ones take heed." People should take heed of Allāh's majesty and powers and refrain from beliefs of polytheism *(shirk)*. They should reflect upon the fact that they are living in places where previous nations were destroyed because of similar beliefs of polytheism *(shirk)*. This would prompt them to mend their ways.

PART FOURTEEN

سورة الحجر

Makkan	Surah Al-Hijr	Verses 99

الٓرۚ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ وَقُرۡءَانٖ مُّبِينٖ ﴿١﴾ رُّبَمَا يَوَدُّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ لَوۡ كَانُواْ مُسۡلِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ذَرۡهُمۡ يَأۡكُلُواْ وَيَتَمَتَّعُواْ وَيُلۡهِهِمُ ٱلۡأَمَلُۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٣﴾ وَمَآ أَهۡلَكۡنَا مِن قَرۡيَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتَابٞ مَّعۡلُومٞ ﴿٤﴾ مَّا تَسۡبِقُ مِنۡ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسۡتَـٔۡخِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Alif Lām Rā. These are the verses of the Book and the clear Qur'ān. (2) Many a time the disbelievers will wish that they were Muslims. (3) Leave them to eat, to enjoy and to let their hopes make them negligent. Soon they will come to know. (4) There was an appointed term for every town that We destroyed. (5) No nation can overtake their term, nor can they defray it.

THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* WILL WISH THAT THEY WERE MUSLIMS

This Surah derives its name from a verse in its 80th verse that speaks of the people of Hijr. Allāh begins the Surah by declaring, *"These are the verses of the (complete) Book and the clear Qur'ān."* Other verses of the Qur'ān have also termed the Qur'ān as a 'clear' book. This is so because the Qur'ān clearly explains its subject matter beyond doubt. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the Qur'ān clearly explains the Lawful *(Halāl)* from the Unlawful *(Harām)* and the truth from falsehood. The word *"Book"* also refers to the Qur'ān, but has been added to denote that the Qur'ān is in the form of a written book before man.

"Many a time the disbelievers will wish that they were Muslims." Although the disbelievers *(kuffār)* mock the Muslims in this world, when they are confronted by Allāh's punishment in the Hereafter, they will yearn that they were also

Muslims so that they could be saved from Hell.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When the people of Hell will be condemned to Hell, they will see some Muslims also in Hell. They will ask them whether they were Muslims and what was the use of their Imān since they are also in Hell. The Muslims will reply that they were sent to Hell on account of their sins. Thereafter Allāh will forgive these Muslims and order that every Muslim should be removed from Hell. The Muslims will then be removed. All of this will be because of Allāh's mercy and grace. Seeing this the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will wish that they were also Muslims."

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 14 p.4*) has also reported this hadith from Sayyidina Jābir and Abu Sa'īd رضى الله عنه. Their narrations report that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse after stating the hadith.

"Leave them to eat, to enjoy and to let their hopes make them negligent." Allāh informs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should not be distressed about their condition if they do not believe. He should let them to be for *"Soon they will come to know (their plight when their actions are reckoned)."*

"There was an appointed term for every town that We destroyed." They were all destroyed when their term expired. Emphasising this point in different words, Allāh says, *"No nation can overtake their term, nor can they defray it."* This verse rules out the possibility of any future nations thinking that they would be able to escape.

وَقَالُواْ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِى نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ ٱلذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٦﴾ لَّوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ إِن كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلصَّـٰدِقِينَ ﴿٧﴾ مَا نُنَزِّلُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوٓاْ إِذًا مُّنظَرِينَ ﴿٨﴾ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا ٱلذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَحَـٰفِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(6) They said, "O you upon whom the Qur'ān has been revealed! You are certainly insane!" (7) "Why do you not come with angels if you are truthful?" (8) We send the angels only with the decision, and then they will not be granted respite. (9) Without doubt We have revealed the Reminder and We shall certainly be its protectors.

ALLĀH IS THE PROTECTOR OF THE QUR'ĀN

Quoting those who refuted the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"They said, 'O you upon whom the Qur'ān has been revealed! You are certainly insane!'"* They said this to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mockingly because they never believed in him as a Prophet.

They said further, *"Why do you not come with angels* (to testify your Prophethood) *if you are truthful* (in your claim as being the Prophet)?"

Allāh replies to them by saying, *"We send the angels only with the decision, and then* (if they still refuse to believe) *they will not be granted respite."* Then they will

be afflicted by Allāh's punishment. Therefore, they were asking for their own destruction by asking for angels to come down.

"Without doubt We have revealed the Reminder (the Qur'ān) and We shall certainly be its protectors." Allāh informs those who rejected the Qur'ān that it will remain as the truth even though they wish to refute it. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* also used to say that the Qur'ān is not from Allāh and, if it is, it will not last very long. Allāh replies to this remark of theirs as well, by declaring that He shall be the One to preserve it until eternity.

In this verse Allāh Himself assumes the responsibility of safeguarding the Qur'ān. He did not leave its preservation to the scholars of Islām, like He did with the Torah and the Injīl, as Allāh says in verse 44 of Surah Ma'idah, " *and the scholars (from the Bani Isrā'īl also judged therewith) because they were instructed to preserve Allāh's Book and they were witnesses to it."*

The Qur'ān is safeguarded from all types of additions, omissions, alterations and adulterations. Every period of time produces many people who memorised the Qur'ān and were knowledgeable about the various forms of recitation. It is because of this that the same Qur'ān that was recited by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is recited today. Muslims are so particular about the recitation of the Qur'ān that even if an 80 year old person recites incorrectly, a nine year old would correct him and vice versa.

Friend and foe alike will attest to the fact that every Qur'ān that was written throughout the centuries has never differed with any other in any way. They all contain that same verses, letters, Surahs and sequence.

Some ignorant people object that the various forms of recitation *(Qirā'ah)* differ. They fail to understand that all these forms of recitation have been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself and all form part of the Qur'ān..

Others object to the abrogation that occurred in the Qur'ān. This objection is also of no consequence since these were made by Allāh Himself and none were made after the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Allāh has safeguarded the Qur'ān from all types of people, even from the Satans *(Shayatīn)*. Allāh says, *"No falsehood can approach it from the front or from the back. It is a revelation from the Wise, Who is Most Worthy of praise."* [*Surah HāMīm Sajdah (41), verse* 42]

THE RAWĀFIDH DO NOT BELIEVE IN ALLĀH'S PROMISE TO PROTECT THE QUR'ĀN BY CLAIMING THAT IT WAS ALTERED

The Qur'ān has been established as a miracle for all times and eras. The challenge to produce even a single Surah like those of the Qur'ān has not been met up to this day. Another aspect of its miraculous nature is that it has been preserved in its pristine purity until today, and shall remain likewise until eternity. It is tragic that certain groups like the Rawāfidh who claim to be Muslims, believe that the Qur'ān was changed. The responsibility rests with them then, that they should try to produce a Surah like any of those in the Qur'ān, since they claim that parts of it were written by men. If they are unable

to meet the challenge then (according to verse 24. of Surah Baqarah) they should *'fear that Fire, the fuel of which is men and stones."*

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي شِيَعِ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَمَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ
يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿١١﴾ كَذَٰلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٢﴾ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ
سُنَّةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾ وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ لَقَالُوا
إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّسْحُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

(10) Undoubtedly we have sent messengers before you to the previous groups. (11) They ridiculed every one of the messengers that came to them. (12) Thus do We make their mockery progress in their hearts. (13) They do not believe in it (the Qur'ān) though the ways of the previous people have passed. (14) If We open to them a door of the sky and they climb it during the day... (15) ..... they will say, "Our eyes have merely been mesmerised. Indeed we are a bewitched people."

THE PREVIOUS NATIONS ALSO RIDICULED THEIR PROPHETS عليهم السلام. THE REJECTERS WILL NOT BELIEVE EVEN IF A DOOR TO THE HEAVENS IS OPENED FOR THEM

Allāh consoled the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the verse, *"Undoubtedly we have sent messengers before you to the previous groups. They ridiculed every one of the messengers that came to them."* Therefore, the behaviour of the polytheists of Makkah are nothing new.

"Thus do We make their mockery progress in their hearts." Allāh caused their mockery to penetrate their own hearts, thereby depriving them of Belief *(Imān)*. They were eventually destroyed and, according to Allāh's divine plan, the Polytheists of Makkah were also to be defeated.

"They do not believe in it (in the Qur'ān) though the ways of the previous people have passed." They still ask for miracles without the intention of believing them. They have sunk so deep in their obstinacy that even *"If We open to them a door of the sky and they climb it during the day,* (then instead of believing) *they will say, 'Our eyes have merely been mesmerised. Indeed we are a bewitched people."*

Instead of believing, they will write off the miracle as magic. When a nation refuses to believe despite being shown a miracle, they will never be blessed with Imān.

وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا لِلنَّاظِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ
رَّجِيمٍ ﴿١٧﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ اسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا
فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ وَمَن لَّسْتُمْ

لَهُۥ بِرَٰزِقِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِندَنَا خَزَآئِنُهُۥ وَمَا نُنَزِّلُهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢١﴾
وَأَرْسَلْنَا ٱلرِّيَٰحَ لَوَٰقِحَ فَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنَٰكُمُوهُ وَمَآ أَنتُمْ لَهُۥ بِخَٰزِنِينَ
﴿٢٢﴾ وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِۦ وَنُمِيتُ وَنَحْنُ ٱلْوَٰرِثُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا ٱلْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنكُمْ وَلَقَدْ
عَلِمْنَا ٱلْمُسْتَـْٔخِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ إِنَّهُۥ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

(16) Verily We have placed stars in the sky and beautified it for spectators. (17) And We have safeguarded it from every accursed Devil (Shaytān). (18) Except the one who steals a hearing. A clear flame pursues him. (19) We have spread out the earth, placed mountains on it and caused a specified quantity of every variety to grow. (20) We have placed the amenities of life on earth and We have created those things that you do not provide for. (21) We have with Us the treasures of all things and We reveal them only in stipulated quantities. (22) We send the winds that fill the clouds with water, then send rains from the sky with which We feed you. You cannot accumulate this much water (by yourselves). (23) Without doubt, it is We Who give life and death, and We will be the successors. (24) Indeed, We know those of you who are first and those of you who follow after. (25) Certainly your Lord shall gather all of them. Verily He is The Wise, The All Knowing.

THE STARS DECORATE THE SKY AND ARE USED TO PELT THE DEVILS *(SHAYĀTĪN)*

In these verses Allāh describes many natural wonders that He has created. Allāh says, *"Verily We have placed stars in the sky and beautified it for spectators."*

Allāh say in Surah Mulk, *"Verily We have beautified the nearest sky with lanterns (the stars), and made them a means of pelting the devils (Shayātīn). We have prepared for them the punishment of the Blaze."* [*Surah 67, verse* 5]

Allāh describes in more vivid detail in Surah Sāffāt, *"Verily, We decorated the sky of this world with the adornment of the stars as a protection from every rebellious devil (Shaytān). They cannot eavesdrop on those (angels) of the upper heights and are pelted from every direction. (They are) Repelled and shall have an eternal punishment. Save for the one who snatches something, then a flaming spark pursues him."* [*Surah 37, verses 6-10*]

Besides what has been quoted above, the stars are also used as navigational aids. Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *".... and they are guided by the stars."* [*Surah 16, verse 16*]

Bukhari reports from Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه that the stars have been created for three purposes:

(1) To beautify the sky.

(2) To pelt the Devils (Shayātīn).

(3) As signs by which travellers may be guided at night.

He adds that whoever uses the stars for any other purpose has erred, destroyed his share (life) and pursued something about which he has no knowledge. Here he was referring to the astrologers.

THE MEANING OF "BURŪJ"

We have translated the Arabic word "Burūj" to mean the stars. This is the most apt meaning and conforms to the above verse of Surah Mulk that describes their function of beautifying the sky. However, other commentators have interpreted the word to mean the twelve signs of the zodiac. In our opinion, this interpretation is erroneous since these have been initiated and named by the philosophers. They cannot be used to pelt the Devils *(Shayātīn)*.

"And We have safeguarded it from every accursed Devil (Shaytān). Except the one who steals a hearing. A clear flame pursues him." This has been more clearly described in the above verse of Surah Sāffāt, where Allāh says, *"They* (the Devils *(Shayātīn) cannot eavesdrop on the higher heavens and* (if they try) *are pelted from every direction and chased away.* (Then in the Hereafter) *Theirs shall be an eternal punishment. Save for the one who snatches something, then a flaming spark pursues him."* It is learnt from this that when a Devil *(Shaytān)* attempts to eavesdrop, he is immediately driven away. However, if he is successful in hearing something, a flaming star is flung at him to kill him.

While this above verse of Surah Hijr describes the star as *"a clear flame's* Surah Sāffāt describes it as *"a flaming spark"*. To understand the nature of these stars, it is necessary to keep the verse of Surah Mulk in mind where Allāh says that the stars are *"lanterns"* that have been placed in the sky for beautification and also serve to the purpose of missiles that are used to pelt the Shayātīn. It is therefore evident that the purposes of the stars are manifold. One may therefore not say that the verses contradict each other.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that some people asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to enlighten them with regard to fortune-tellers. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "They are nothing." It was then said that they sometimes do predict accurately. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "That will be a statement that a Jinn has snatched up and whispered into his friend's ear, just as a fowl pecks. He then mixes it with over a hundred lies." [*Mishkāt p. 393*]

[For more details one should refer to the commentary of the opening verses of Surah Jinn].

THE EARTH, THE MOUNTAINS AND THE TREES CONTAIN SIGNS BY WHICH PEOPLE MAY RECOGNISE ALLĀH

"We have spread out the earth, placed mountains on it..." The earth is one of Allāh's great creations that is before everyone's eyes. Allāh says in Surah Luqmān, *"Allāh created the skies without any visible pillar, has placed mountains on earth so that it does not shake with you..."* [*Surah 31, verse 10*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 14 p.29*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the earth was spread on water and it began to bob like a boat. Allāh

therefore placed mountains on it so that it stabilises.

Allāh says in Surah Naba, *"Did We not make the earth a mat and the mountains as pegs?"* The mountains stabilise the earth with Allāh's command. Otherwise, when judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* dawns, they will fly about.

Thereafter Allāh says that He *"caused a specified quantity of every variety to grow."* Everything grows according to Allāh's plan.

"We have placed the amenities of life on earth..." Man's necessities are all found on earth, allowing him to survive.

".... and We have created those things that you do not provide for." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Allāh has created for man all types of creatures that serve him. Allāh provides for all of them just as He provides for man himself.

"We have with Us the treasures of all things and We reveal them only in stipulated quantities." Allāh has control over all His creation. He sustains all of them and he stipulates when, where and how much to grant.

"We send the winds that fill the clouds with water, then send rains from the sky with which We feed you." Allāh causes the winds to fill the clouds that are then commanded by Him to shower its rain upon the areas that He desires. Man and all other creatures then derive benefit from it.

"You cannot accumulate this much water (by yourselves)." Man cannot cause the clouds to fill with water, nor can he cause the clouds to rain where he wills. Allāh sends these from His treasures. Once the rain falls, man can retain and store only a limited quantity of water, which will soon deplete. Allāh stores the water for man in the rivers and underground water table.

"Without doubt, it is We Who give life and death, and We will be the successors." Everything will come to an end besides Allāh. He will survive all His creation. Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"Without a shadow of doubt, We will be the inheritors of the earth and whoever is upon it and they will return to Us only."* [*Surah 19, verse 40*]

All temporary owners will perish and only the True Master and Owner shall prevail. Allāh says in Surah Mu'min that when all will perish, Allāh will announce, *"To Whom does all Kingdom belong today? To Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent."* [*Surah 40, verse 16*]

"Indeed, We know those of you who are first and those of you who follow after." With regard to the interpretation of this verse, the author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p.48*) has reported numerous opinions. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه says that *"the first"* refers to the deceased and those *"who follow after"* refers to the living. According to Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه *"the first"* refers to the previous nations, and those *"who follow after"* refers to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه states that *"the first"* refers to those people who excel in virtue and obedience to Allāh, while those *"who follow after"* refers to those who lag behind in this regard. Another opinion says that *"the first"* refers to those who occupy the first few Saffs *(rows of Salāh)*, and those *"who follow after"* refers to those occupying the other Saffs *(rows)*. The general nature of the verse

includes all these interpretations, and Allāh has knowledge of all the people mentioned above.

"Certainly your Lord shall gather all of them. Verily He is The Wise, The All Knowing." No soul will escape resurrection since Allāh is aware of all people, past, present and future.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ (26) وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن قَبْلُ مِن نَّارِ السَّمُومِ (27) وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِّن صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ (28) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ (29) فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ (30) إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ (31) قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا لَكَ أَلَّا تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ (32) قَالَ لَمْ أَكُن لِّأَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُ مِن صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ (33) قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ (34) وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ (35) قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرْنِي إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ (36) قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ (37) إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ (38) قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (39) إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ (40) قَالَ هَٰذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيمٌ (41) إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ (42) وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (43) لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِّكُلِّ بَابٍ مِّنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُومٌ (44)

(26) Indeed we created man out of melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay. (27) And the Jinn We created before out of Fire derived from a scorching wind. (28) When your Lord said to the angels, "I am creating a human out of melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay." (29) "So when I have completed him and blown My spirit into him, then fall in prostration to him." (30) Every one of the angels prostrated... (31) except Iblīs. He refused to be of the prostrated ones. (32) Allāh said, "O Iblīs! What ails you that you are not of the prostrated ones?" (33) He replied, "I shall not prostrate to a human that You created out of melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay." (34) Allāh said, "Go from here, for you are indeed outcast." (35) "You shall be accursed until the day of judgment (Qiyāmah)." (36) He said, "Grant me respite until the day when they will be resurrected." (37) Allāh said, "You are of those granted respite... (38) ... until an appointed time." (39) He said, "My Lord! Because You have sent me astray, I will certainly beautify things for them on earth and lead them all astray." (40) "Except Your chosen bondsmen from them. (41) Allāh said, "This is the straight path that leads to Me." (42) "Indeed you will have no sway

over My bondsmen, except those deviant ones who follow you." (43) "Verily Hell is their promised abode." (44) "It has seven doors. Each door shall have a stipulated share of them."

IBLĪS DISOBEYS THE COMMAND TO PROSTRATE, IS CURSED AND REQUESTS TO BE ALLOWED LIFE UNTIL JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)*

These verses speak of Allāh's command to the angels to prostrate before Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. The all complied with the command except Iblīs. In the above verse Allāh refers to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام as a *"human,"* whereas his name is mentioned in Surah Baqarah, Surah A'rāf Surah Bani Isra'īl and several other Surahs.

The word 'Insān' (man) is derived from the root word 'uns' ('affection' or 'coexistence'). Thus, he has been termed 'insān' because no man can live in isolation and man requires to coexist with other people, sharing their affection. The word 'insān' refers to all the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, be they male or female.

Another Arabic term used for man is 'bashar.' The word literally means 'skin.' It is used for man because, unlike other animals, his skin is not completely covered in hair. Excluding his head, most of the skin on his body is visible.

THE MEANING OF "MELODIOUS SAND DERIVED FROM DARK DECOMPOSING CLAY"

Surah Mu'min mentions that man was created from soil, while Surah Sād and the above verse (26) of Surah Hijr mention that it was clay. The above verse states that man was made out of *"melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay."* In Surah Rahmān Allāh says that He *"created man from melodious sand..."*

The fact is that water was mixed with soil, turning it into clay. Then this clay was left until it began to decompose and become dark in colour. Thereafter the mould of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was cast with this. When the mould set and dried, it became like potted clay that has a melodious sound when struck. The various verses of the Qur'ān individually refer to these various stages in man's creation.

"And the Jinn We created before out of Fire derived from a scorching wind." This verse refers to the creation of the first Jinn. Some commentators say that he was Devil *(Iblīs)*, but this is not proven. The book *"Ākāmul Marjān"* reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the first Jinn created was called Sūmi. All the Jinn were his progeny.

The same book mentions that the Jinn lived on earth two thousand years before the creation of man. According to another narration, the period was forty years. Eventually they spread so much corruption on earth, that they killed their king (or the Holy Prophet according to others) called Yusuf.

The angels referred to these Jinn when they asked Allāh, *"Will You place on earth someone who will cause anarchy there and spill blood?"* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 30*]

In Surah Rahmān Allāh says that He created the Jinn from *"pure leaping fire"* that is smokeless. By combining this verse with the above verse of Surah Hijr, it is deduced that they were created from such a fire that cannot be seen. The word 'Samūm' *('a scorching wind')* is derived from a root word that means 'poison.' It is for this reason that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the wind from which the Jinn were created is so hot that it can kill.

Because *"was from the Jinn"*, he refused to prostrate to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. His reason was, as he says in Surah A'rāf, *"I am better than him! You have created me from fire and created him from clay."* He deemed fire to be superior to clay, but in reality, mud is superior because it is constructive, while fire is destructive.

DEVIL IBLĪS REFUSES TO PROSTRATE

"When your Lord said to the angels, 'I am creating a human out of melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay. So when I have completed him and blown My spirit into him, then fall in prostration to him." This prostration was not for worship, but to show respect. This is not permissible in the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم even though the prostration is only to show respect.

Consequently, *"Every one of the angels prostrated except Iblīs. He refused to be of the prostrated ones."* Even though Iblīs was a Jinn, he lived with the angels. The command to prostrate was given to him as well, as is clearly mentioned in verse 12 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

"Allāh said, 'O Devil (Iblīs)! What ails you that you are not of the prostrated ones?" With pride brimming in his heart, Devil *(Iblīs)* replied, *"I shall not prostrate to a human that You created out of melodious sand derived from dark decomposing clay."*

According to a verse in Surah Bani Isra'īl, he replied. *'Should I prostrate to one whom You have created from mud?"* [*Surah 17, verse 61*]

"Allāh said, 'Go from here, for you are indeed outcast. You shall be accursed until the day of judgment (Qiyāmah)." It is obvious that after the Day of Judgement he will be accursed as well since he will die as a disbeliever *(kāfir)*.

THE ACCURSED NATURE OF DEVIL *(IBLĪS)*

After being cursed, Devil *(Iblīs)* was not repentant but rather accepted his plight as being accursed by Allāh. Instead of pleading with Allāh for forgiveness, he swore to mislead man. *"He said, 'Grant me respite until the day when they will be resurrected.' Allāh said, 'You are of those granted respite until an appointed time."'* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the *"appointed time"* refers to the time when the trumpet will be blown for the first time on the Day of Judgement. This interpretation has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and is the opinion of the majority of commentators.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه that after the trumpet is blown the first time, Allāh will instruct the angel of death to extract the soul of devil *(Iblīs)*. Seeing the angel of death, Devil *(Iblīs)* will scramble to the east and then to the west. Wherever he goes, he will find the angel before him. He will then dive into the ocean, but it will reject him. The same will happen to

him when he will attempt to seek refuge inside the earth. He will not be able to hide anywhere. Eventually, the angels with the angel of death will grab hold of him. He will then continue to suffer the pangs of death until Allāh wills his death.

IBLĪS PLEADS FOR AN EXTENSION TO HIS LIFE SO THAT HE MAY MISLEAD MAN

The above narration from Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه is based upon the narrations of the Bani Isra'īl, the veracity of which remains uncertain. What is certain however is that he requested this extended life for the sole purpose of misleading man. *"He said, 'My Lord! Because You have sent me astray, I will certainly beautify things for them on earth and lead them all astray.*

In the above verse he states how he intends to mislead man i.e. by beautifying their evil actions for them. Some of his ploys were discussed in Surah Nisā (Surah 4) in the commentary of verse 117 where Allāh says, *"They supplicate only to females and call upon the rebellious Devil (Shaytān) whom Allāh has cursed."* The subject is also discussed in the commentary of verse 16 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Devil *(Shaytān)* mentions *"Because You have sent me astray I will definitely waylay them on Your straight path. Then I will approach them from the front, the back, their right and their left and You shall find most of them to be ungrateful."*

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* IS POWERLESS TO MISLEAD THE CHOSEN SERVANTS OF ALLĀH

After swearing to mislead all of mankind, Satan *(Shaytān)* conceded, *"Except Your chosen bondsmen from them."* He is unable to mislead them.

"Allāh said, 'This (path adopted by My chosen slaves) *is the straight path that leads to Me."'* This leads to Allāh's pleasure. These are the people who will adhere to Allāh's commandments and remain aloof from Satan *(Shaytān)* and his guile.

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* WILL HAVE SWAY ONLY OVER THOSE WHO HAVE DEVIATED

Allāh told Satan *(Shaytān)*, *"Indeed you have no sway over My bondsmen, except those deviant ones who follow you."* Allāh's chosen servants understand the ploys of Shaytān and are not deceived by the way he beautifies sins. However, those who are averse to the guidance of the Prophets عليهم السلام and divine scriptures fall headlong for his ploys. He merely has to whisper evil into their minds and hearts to make them carry out a sin.

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"Indeed he has no sway over those who believe and who rely solely on their Lord. His sway is only on those who befriend him and those who ascribe partners to Allāh."* [*Surah 16, verses 99, 100*]

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* AND HIS FOLLOWERS ARE DESTINED FOR HELL

Allāh says with regard to those who will follow Satan *(Shaytān)*, *"Verily Hell is their promised abode."* Allāh told him, *"I shall certainly fill Hell with yourself and all*

those of them who follow you." It is indeed tragic that men follow their sworn enemy, who has vowed to mislead them. For a few fleeting moments of pleasure, they are prepared to sacrifice their welfare in the Hereafter!

Allāh then describes Hell by saying that *'it has seven doors."* Commentators have mentioned that there are seven doors because so many people will enter Hell.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Hell has seven doors, one of which is reserved for those who draw their swords to kill my Ummah." [*Mishkāt p. 306*]

Other commentators have mentioned that the seven doors refer to the seven levels of Hell. Each level will have a different punishment.

"Each door shall have a stipulated share of them." Each person will be punished according to his sins. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 14 p.53*) has written that one door will be reserved for the entry of the sinful Muslims. He says that another door will be for the Jews, another for the Christians, another for the Sabians, another for the fire worshippers, another for the Polytheists and the last will be for the hypocrites *(Munāfiqīn)*.

This opinion has also been reported by Imām Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه from Sayyidina Dahhāk رحمة الله عليه, but it is not substantiated by any Hadith. Every person should be concerned about saving himself from the terrible torment of Hell, the fire of which will be 69 times more intense than the fire of this world (as narrated in Bukhari).

إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ ٱدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَٰمٍ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَٰبِلِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ۞ نَبِّئْ عِبَادِىٓ أَنِّىٓ أَنَا ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَأَنَّ عَذَابِى هُوَ ٱلْعَذَابُ ٱلْأَلِيمُ ﴿٥٠﴾

(45) Those who adopt piety (taqwa) will certainly be in gardens and springs. (46) "Enter therein with peace and safety." (47) We shall remove any animosity that may be in their breasts. As brothers they will be seated on couches, facing each other. (48) No difficulty shall afflict them there, neither will they be removed from there. (49) Inform My bondsmen that I am certainly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful... (50) And that My punishment is definitely a most excruciating punishment.

THE PIOUS WILL LIVE PEACEFULLY IN GARDENS AND SPRINGS WITHOUT ANY ANIMOSITY BETWEEN THEM

There are various levels of piety *(taqwa)*, the highest of which is to save one's self from Hell. Abstaining from major and minor sins also constitutes piety *(taqwa)*, just as piety *(taqwa)* will cause one to abstain from doubtful matters.

Only Muslims will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* which is referred to in this and many other verses as *"gardens."*

The above verse mentions that they will enjoy these gardens with all its springs. Other verses mention that these gardens will have *"rivers running beneath them."* In Heaven *(Jannah)* they will enjoy many bounties of Allāh, the greatest of which will be Allāh's pleasure.

The people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be carefree and live in total peace and tranquillity. Their hearts will be cleansed of all enmity and animosity that they may have harboured in this world. As a result, all the inhabitants of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be like brothers, having no jealousy, arguments and disputes.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "No believer *(Mu'min)* will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* until his bosom is cleared of all dirt, just as a predator is removed from the path." [*v.* 2 p.55]

"..... they will be seated on couches, facing each other." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will never see the backs of each other. Their couches will rotate in every direction so that they will always face each other.

THE PEOPLE OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* WILL NOT EXPERIENCE ANY DIFFICULTY NOR WILL THEY BE REMOVED FROM THERE

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah that the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be seated on *"They will be on woven thrones (of gold), reclining on these facing each other."* [*Surah* 56, *verses* 15, 16]

Allāh then says in the above verses, *"No difficulty shall afflict them there, neither will they be removed from there."* The people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will not suffer any hardships, fatigue, anguish and grief at all. They will abide therein forever and will never have to suffer expulsion nor any deficiency in the bounties.

A verse in Surah Fātir states that the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will say, *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us. Undoubtedly our Lord is Most Forgiving, Appreciative. Our Lord has settled us in an eternal home by His grace. Herein, no difficulty will ever afflict us, nor shall any tiredness touch us."* [*Surah* 35, *verses* 34, 35]

After explaining the situation of the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell, Allāh says, *"Inform My bondsmen that I am certainly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful and that My punishment is definitely a most excruciating punishment."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this verse denotes that those believers *(Mu'minīn)* who sinned may also be entered into Heaven *(Jannah)*, even though they may not have repented before their deaths. This will be because Allāh is *"the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."*

However, these believers *(Mu'minīn)* should not be beguiled into thinking that they may continue to sin without repenting. They should also bear in mind that Allāh is able to punish just as effectively, and that His punishment is not

light. They may also have to suffer temporarily in Hell. As reported in the Ahadīth, people should always refrain from sins and, if they have sinned inadvertently, they should not delay in repenting.

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ عَن ضَيْفِ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿51﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا۟ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا۟ سَلَـٰمًا قَالَ إِنَّا مِنكُمْ وَجِلُونَ ﴿52﴾
قَالُوا۟ لَا تَوْجَلْ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَـٰمٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿53﴾ قَالَ أَبَشَّرْتُمُونِى عَلَىٰٓ أَن مَّسَّنِىَ ٱلْكِبَرُ
فَبِمَ تُبَشِّرُونَ ﴿54﴾ قَالُوا۟ بَشَّرْنَـٰكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ ٱلْقَـٰنِطِينَ ﴿55﴾ قَالَ وَمَن
يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ إِلَّا ٱلضَّآلُّونَ ﴿56﴾

(51) And inform them of Ibrahīm's guests. (52) When they entered his presence they greeted with Salām. He said, "We are afraid of you." (53) They said, "Do not be afraid. Indeed, we wish to convey to you the glad tidings of a knowledgeable child." (54) He said, "Do you give me these glad tidings when old-age has afflicted me? What glad tidings can you deliver?" (55) They said, "We convey to you the glad tidings of a reality, so do not become of the despondent ones." (56) He said, "Only the deviant are despondent of Allāh's mercy."

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام GROWS APPREHENSIVE OF HIS GUESTS BUT THEY REASSURE HIM WITH THE GLAD TIDINGS OF A SON

These verses describe the meeting Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had with certain angels whom Allāh had sent to him. They were charged with conveying to him the news of a son to be born to him. They were also commanded to punish the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. This episode was discussed in Surah Hūd, and will be repeated in Surah Dhāriyāt. [*Surah 51, verses 24-37*]

Since this was the first time that he met them, he told them that they were *"unfamiliar people."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام served a roasted lamb to them, but they did not eat it since angels do not eat. This surprised him and he said, *"We are afraid of you."*

The angels reassured him by saying, *"Do not be afraid. Indeed, we wish to convey to you the glad tidings of a knowledgeable child."* As mentioned in Surah Hūd, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his wife, Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام, were aged by then. Astonished by their news, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام asked them, *"Do you give me these glad tidings when old-age has afflicted me? What glad tidings can you deliver?"*

The angels replied, *'We convey to you the glad tidings of a reality* (nothing is impossible for Allāh), *so do not become of the despondent ones."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام expressed his acknowledgement of this fact by saying, *"Only the deviant are despondent of Allāh's mercy."* Although he realised this all along, his question was not based on despondency of Allāh's mercy, but the astonishing nature of the news prompted this question. As mentioned in

Surah Hūd, they informed him of the birth of a son Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام and of a grandson Sayyidina Yaqūb عليه السلام.

Surah Sāffāt mentions that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made a plea to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Grant me a son from among the pious..' So We conveyed to him the good news of a tolerant son."* In the verse under discussion, Allāh says that consequently, *"We conveyed to him the glad tidings of a knowledgeable son."* According to certain commentators, the above verse of Surah Sāffāt refers to the birth of Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, while those in Surahs Hūd, Hijr and Dhāriyāt refer to the birth of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. Further details will follow in the commentary of Surah Sāffāt, Insha Allāh

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿57﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿58﴾ إِلَّا
آلَ لُوطٍ إِنَّا لَمُنَجُّوهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿59﴾ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ قَدَّرْنَا إِنَّهَا لَمِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ
﴿60﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَ آلَ لُوطٍ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿61﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿62﴾ قَالُوا بَلْ
جِئْنَاكَ بِمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿63﴾ وَأَتَيْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ﴿64﴾ فَأَسْرِ
بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ وَاتَّبِعْ أَدْبَارَهُمْ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنْكُمْ أَحَدٌ وَامْضُوا حَيْثُ تُؤْمَرُونَ
﴿65﴾ وَقَضَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ ذَٰلِكَ الْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿66﴾ وَجَاءَ أَهْلُ
الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿67﴾ قَالَ إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ضَيْفِي فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ﴿68﴾ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا
تُخْزُونِ ﴿69﴾ قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿70﴾ قَالَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ
﴿71﴾ لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿72﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ ﴿73﴾ فَجَعَلْنَا
عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ ﴿74﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ
﴿75﴾ وَإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُقِيمٍ ﴿76﴾ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿77﴾

(57) Ibrahīm said (to the angels), "What assignment have you been commissioned with, O messengers?" (58) They said, "We have been sent to (destroy) a felonious nation... (59)....Except the family of Lūt. We shall surely rescue all of them... (60) ..... except his wife. We have decided that she be left behind (with the sinners)." (61) When the messengers came to the family of Lūt... (62) ... he said, "Indeed you people are unfamiliar." (63) They said, "No. In fact we have brought to you what they used to doubt." (64) "And we have brought the truth to you and we are of the truthful." (65) "So travel with your family during a portion of the night, follow on their heels and none of you should turn around. And proceed whence you have been commanded." (66) We decreed to him this matter that the roots of these people shall be severed by the morning. (67) The people of the town arrived rejoicingly. (68) Lūt عليه السلام said "These are my guests so do not disgrace me... (69) Fear Allāh and do not

humiliate me." (70) They replied, "Have we not forbidden you from all the people of the world?" (71) He said, "Here are my daughters if you must do something." (72) By your life! They were blinded in their intoxication. (73) So a scream seized them at sunrise. (74) We turned them upside down and showered clay pebbles on them. (75) Indeed herein are signs for those who have foresight. (76) These towns are along an accessible thoroughfare. (77) There are certainly signs in this for the believers.

THE GUESTS OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام WERE ANGELS THEY PROCEEDED TO PUNISH THE PEOPLE OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام AFTER CONVEYING THE GLAD TIDINGS TO SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

The destruction of Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام nation was discussed in Surah A'rāf and Surah Hūd . It will also be repeated in Surah Ankabūt. They were engaged in the great evil of homosexuality and refused to take heed to the preaching of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام. They were even bold enough to say, *"Bring Allāh's punishment to us if you are from among the truthful."*

Allāh says, *"When the messengers came to the family of Lūt he said, 'Indeed you people are unfamiliar.'"* He said this because he had never seen them before, as was the case with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

The angels replied by saying, *"No. In fact we have brought to you what they used to doubt. We have brought the truth to you and we are of the truthful."* They then informed him that his nation was to be afflicted with a punishment. The only survivors were to be his family, with the exception of his wife. Therefore, they advised him, *"So travel with your family during a portion of the night, follow on their heels* (to ensure that none are left behind) *and none of you should turn around. And proceed whence you have been commanded."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that they were to proceed to Syria *(Shām),* while other commentators maintain that their destination was Jordan.

THE DEPRAVITY AND RESULTANT DESTRUCTION OF THE NATION OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام

Since the angels were extremely handsome and foreign to the town, *"The people of the town arrived rejoicingly."* They were excited to practise their villainy on the angels. *"Lūt* عليه السلام *said, "These are my guests so do not disgrace me. Fear Allāh and do not humiliate me."* His plea had no effect on them.

"They replied, 'Have we not forbidden you from (hosting) all the people of the world?'" They also forbade him from preventing them from their objectives. Realising that they were besotted, *"He said, 'Here are my daughters (i.e. the women of the nation) if you must do something.'"* By marrying these women, they were able to satiate their passions in a lawful manner.

As was discussed in verse 79 of Surah Hūd (*Surah 11*), *"They replied, 'You know very well that we have no interest in your daughters. You are well aware of our intentions."*

They refused to listen to him, so Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام left the town during

the night as instructed. As a result, *"a scream seized them at sunrise."* Together with this, Jibr'īl عليه السلام lifted the cities and threw them down again, as Allāh says, *"We turned them upside down..."* In addition to all of this, Allāh *"showered clay pebbles on them."*

The above verse, as well as those in Surah Hūd and Surah Dhāriyāt indicate that the stones were not the average stone. They were such stones that were made of clay and then baked to harden. Verse 82 of Surah Hūd mentions that the stones rained continuously.upon them. It is also learnt from a combination of the various verses, that the nation of Lūt عليه السلام were afflicted by three types of punishment. These were (1) a scream, (2) the overturning of their cities and (3) the shower of stones.

Surah Barā'ah refers to the cities of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام as *"the overturned cities"*. Allāh says in Surah Najm that He, *"also threw down the overturned cities. So that engulfed them which did. (i.e. the shower of stones)."* [*Surah* 53, *verses* 52, 53]

Commentators mention that Sayyidina Lūt's عليه السلام wife either never left with the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, or she turned around to look at the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, because of which a stone struck her dead.

The question then arises as to why were stones rained on them when they were already crushed by the overturning of their cities Commentators have replied to this by saying that the stones were used to kill those who were out of the cities.

These cities lay close to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea now occupies the area where they once lived. The Dead Sea is foul smelling and useless to man and animal. Its shores do not pass out of the borders of these cities.

THE CITIES OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام ARE A LESSON TO THOSE WHO PASS BY THEM

After recounting the incident of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"Indeed in this are signs for those who have foresight. These towns are along an accessible thoroughfare. There are certainly signs in there for the believers."* The Arabs continuously passed by the ruins of these cities lying beneath the waters when they travelled the road to Syria on trade journeys. They could easily reflect upon the lesson taught by this episode, thereby adopting Belief *(Imān)*.

With regard to the same incident, Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, *"You pass by them in the mornings and at nights. Do you not understand?"* [*Surah* 37, *verse* 137, 138]

It is indeed despicable that the so-called 'civilized' nations are also foremost in committing the vile act of homosexuality in addition to their already rampant practice of fornication. They are indeed hastening towards a perilous doom. *"So wait! Indeed we are waiting with you.:"*

THE HONOUR OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IN THAT ALLĀH HAS SWORN BY HIS LIFE

Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"By your life! They were blinded in their intoxication."* The word *"life"* in this verse refers to the life of

the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 14 p.72*) narrates from Bayhaqi that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه said, "Allāh has not created a soul that is more honoured and revered than that of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم Allāh has not taken an oath on any life besides his."

A person may enquire as to how is it possible for an oath to be taken by any name besides Allāh's, since this is forbidden in the Shari'ah? The reply is simple. The prohibition is for man. He may not take an oath by any other besides Allāh since this will amount to polytheism *(shirk)*. However, Allāh is not constrained by any laws and may swear by whomsoever and whatsoever He pleases. Allāh's oaths do not imply that the things by which He swears are superior to Him.

Allāh has taken numerous oaths in the Qur'ān e.g. *"By the fig!" "By the olive!" "By the oath of the winds that disperse!" "By sky and the night knocker!"* The commentators have mentioned that the things by which Allāh swears are such things that clearly display Allāh's power or they are immensely beneficial to man. They are also of such a nature that they reveal Allāh's Oneness and grandeur to those who ponder over them.

وَإِن كَانَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأَيْكَةِ لَظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

(78) Without doubt, the people of Aykah were oppressors... (79) So We extracted vengeance from them. Indeed the two of them are along on accessible thoroughfare.

THE PEOPLE OF AYKAH WERE DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THEIR OPPRESSION

The Arabic word 'Aykah' means a 'thicket' or a 'forest.' It refers to any place that is dense with trees. The *"people of Aykah"* will therefore refer to people who live in such a place.

Other commentators have also translated *"the people of Aykah" to* mean people of the woods' and stated that these were a nation to whom Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام was sent. Like the people of Madyan (to whom he was also sent), the people of Aykah were also involved in cheating others in weight and measure.

Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام preached to both these nations, but they refused to listen. The destruction of the people of Madyan is mentioned in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 85-93*] Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 84-95*]. Surah Shu'arā [*Surah 26, verses 176-191*] makes mention of how the people of Aykah asked for punishment and how it came to them. Allāh says there, *"So they falsified him and the punishment of a day of the canopy seized them. It was certainly a punishment of a grave day."* [*Surah 26, verse 189*]

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that Allāh caused them to suffer seven days of intense heat. Thereafter, they saw a cloud approaching. They all hastened towards the cloud to use it as a *"canopy"* and seek shelter from the blistering heat. However, when they all gathered under the cloud, Allāh caused a fire to emerge from the cloud, scorching them all to death.

THE CITIES OF THE PEOPLE OF SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام AND THOSE OF THE PEOPLE OF AYKAH ARE SITUATED ALONG A MAIN ROUTE

"Indeed the two of them are along an accessible thoroughfare." Ibn Kathīr mentions that the people of Aykah lived close to the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and their era was not long after them. Both these colonies lay on either side of the same trade route that the Arabs took to Syria.

(80) The people of Hijr denied the messengers. (81) Our signs came to them, yet they ignored these. (82) They used to carve homes out of the mountains, living in great peace. (83) A scream seized them during the morning. (84) Whatever they earned was of no avail to them.

THE DENIAL AND RESULTANT DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF HIJR

The *"people of Hijr"* refers to the nation of Thamūd because they lived in the valley of Hijr. They lived on earth after the nation of Ād was destroyed. The Thamūd were also extremely powerful people and were able to carve homes out of mountains. Allāh says in Surah Fajr, *"And have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Thamūd, who hewed the mountains in the valley."* In the above verse Allāh says, *"They used to carve homes out of the mountains, living in great peace.-"*

Allāh says, *"The people of Hijr denied the messengers."* Because the denial of any one messenger amounts to the denial of every other messenger, the plural of the word 'messenger' is used. This is because all the Prophets عليهم السلام brought the same message. Allāh says, *"Our signs came to them, yet they ignored these."* Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام even displayed to them the miracle of a pregnant camel emerging from a rock, but they refused to believe.

As a result of this, *"A scream seized them during the morning."* Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"So an earthquake seized them and they lay face down in their homes."* [*Surah 7, verse 78*]

Says Allāh in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"As for the Thamud, We guided them, but they chose blindness instead of guidance. So, because of what they earned, a catastrophic punishment seized them, which was extremely humiliating."* From these verses it is deduced that the Thamud were also afflicted with three types of punishment viz. (1) a scream, (2) a screech from above and (3) an earthquake. The Arabic word for "screech" may also be translated as "punishment".

These people invested all their resources in this worldly life and paid' no heed to the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Whatever they earned was of no avail to them."*

All their worldly resources were wasted to them.

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَءَاتِيَةٌ ۖ فَٱصْفَحِ ٱلصَّفْحَ ٱلْجَمِيلَ ﴿٨٥﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ ٱلْخَلَّٰقُ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٦﴾

(85) We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them with the truth. Indeed judgment day (Qiyāmah) is approaching, so pardon with a most graceful pardon. (86) Verily your Lord is the Great Creator, the All Knowing.

ALLĀH CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WITH IMMENSE WISDOM

"We have created the heavens, the earth and whatever is between them with the truth." This means that Allāh created these phenomena with perfect wisdom so that people may recognise Allāh's power and grandeur by observing them. After pondering over these creations, man should exclaim, *"O our Lord! You have not created this in vain."*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets the verses to mean that Allāh created everything according to His divine wisdom so that no corruption should prevail upon this earth. Therefore, He destroyed the nations that caused corruption to rid the world of them and so that they may serve as a lesson to those after them.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" also quotes certain other commentators who interpret *"the truth"* as 'justice.' According to this interpretation, Allāh created the heavens, the earth and their contents so that He may judge them all with justice on the Day of Judgement.

"Indeed judgment day *(Qiyāmah) is approaching..."* This verse offers comfort to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because it informs him that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and his antagonists will all be presented before Allāh on the day of Judgement. There they will all be punished for their aggressions.

"....so pardon with a most graceful pardon." Scholars *(Ulama)* have mentioned that this type of pardon is such that the injured party does not reproach nor rebuke the aggressor. According to some commentators, this command has been cancelled by the order of Jihād, meaning that the Muslims need no longer pardon every offence of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* but are allowed to retaliate by waging Jihād. Other commentators are of the opinion that the verse should not be regarded as cancelled since it applies to situations where Jihād cannot be waged. In such circumstances, Muslims should pardon the injustices of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*; continue to behave courteously towards them and keep inviting them towards Islām with wisdom and good character.

"Verily your Lord is the Great Creator, the All Knowing." Allāh is aware of the aggression of the aggressors, as well as the patience exercised by the oppressed. He will reward or punish all accordingly. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم need therefore not grieve over their situation. Allāh shall deal with them.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَـٰكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَثَانِى وَٱلْقُرْءَانَ ٱلْعَظِيمَ ﴿87﴾ لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿88﴾ وَقُلْ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا ٱلنَّذِيرُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿89﴾

(87) Verily We have granted you seven verses that are often repeated, and the glorious Qur'ān. (88) Never focus your eyes on the enjoyment that We have granted to the various groups of the disbelievers, and do not grieve over them. And lower your wings for the believers. (89) Say, "Indeed I am but a clear warner."

ALLĀH INFORMS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم THAT HE HAS BEEN GRANTED SEVEN OFT REPEATED VERSES TOGETHER WITH THE GLORIOUS QUR'ĀN

The people who denied the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were generally the affluent members of society. In the above verses, Allāh reminds the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he has been granted an even greater bounty than the wealth that they possess. Allāh says, *"Verily We have granted you seven verses that are often repeated, and the glorious Qur'ān."*

The *"seven verses that are often repeated"* refers to Surah Fāthihā, which consists of seven verses that are repeated in every Rakāh of Salāh. Allāh informs His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should never be grieved over how the disbelievers *(kuffār)* treat him because Allāh has indeed conferred upon him the greatest of bounties.

ONE SHOULD NOT FOCUS ON WHAT THE PEOPLE OF THE DUNYA (*WORLD*) HAVE BEEN GRANTED

"Never focus your eyes on the enjoyment that We have granted to the various groups of the disbelievers" Whatever wealth and riches they possess can never compare to the great bounty of the Qur'ān. Certain commentators mention that although the verse appears to be addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended to address the entire Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"Never strain your eyes towards the splendour of the worldly life and the wives that We have granted the disbelievers to enjoy, to test them with. The provision of your Lord is best and more lasting."* Anything granted as a test for someone cannot really be a bounty.

"....and do not grieve over them." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was to continue with his responsibility and not be deterred by the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and other antagonists. Allāh will deal with them.

"And lower your wings for the believers." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is instructed not to waste his efforts by grieving over the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, but that he should rather focus his attention on the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He should show mercy and compassion towards them so that they realise that they are more valuable than the disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

"Say, 'Indeed I am but a clear warner.'" In this verse the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has to make it clear to the disbelievers *(kuffār)* what his task was. He was to warn them of Allāh's punishment should they transgress. If they did not obey, it was to their own peril.

(90) As We have revealed to the dividers... (91) Those who divided the Qur'ān into various portions. (92) By your Lord! We will definitely question each one of them... (93) ...regarding what they used to do. (94) Clearly announce what you have been commanded with and ignore the idolaters. (95) We will suffice for you against those who ridicule... (96) Those who ascribe other gods to Allāh. Soon they will come to know!

THE PREVIOUS UMMAHS DIVIDED THEIR SCRIPTURES INTO SEGMENTS

In the above verses, Allāh says that He had also revealed scriptures to *"the dividers..."* He then describes who they were by saying that they were *"Those who divided the Qur'ān into various portions."* The word *"Qur'ān"* as used in this verse refers to the 'scriptures of these people. The word 'Qur'ān' literally means 'something that is recited.' These people divided their scriptures by believing some parts only and rejecting the rest.

According to other commentators, the verse means that Allāh will punish anyone who creates a similar division in the Qur'ān, as the previous nations had done to their divine scriptures.

Certain commentators have mentioned that sixteen polytheists of Makkah decided to divide the roads and valleys leading to Makkah among themselves. Each one of them would station himself on his road and inform the people entering Makkah for Hajj that they should not pay heed to the person who claims to be the Holy Prophet. Some told the people that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a madman; others said that he was a fortune-teller, while others said that he was a poet.

According to this interpretation, the verse means that the people who divided the streets among themselves are destroyed. The Qur'ān was revealed to them as well, but they did not pay heed to it. Consequently all of these persons were killed in the Battle of Badr.

"Those who divided the Qur'ān into various portions." The polytheists denied the Qur'ān by calling it various names. Some said that the Qur'ān was a product of magic. Others wrote it off as poetry, while others were bold enough to call it a

lie. Some people said that it was *"tales of the old folk."* In the light of these interpretations, the word *"Qur'ān"* would refer to the Qur'ān that we are acquainted with.

"By your Lord! We will definitely question each one of them regarding what they used to do." On the day of Judgement, Allāh will question every person who lived on earth. Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"We shall definitely question those to whom messengers were sent and We will surely question the messengers."* [*Surah 7, verse 6*]

At this juncture a question is raised. In a verse of Surah Rahmān Allāh says, *"On that day no man and no Jinn shall be asked about his sins."* This verse negates questioning on the day of Judgement, whereas both the above verses of Surah Hijr and of Surah A'rāf confirm that questioning will take place. When this apparent discrepancy was posed before Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, he replied that the questioning will not be to ascertain the truth of the matter. Rather, it will serve to admonish the criminal for his misdeed just like how a criminal in this world is asked whether he committed a certain crime when his guilt has already been proven.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that during the long Day of Judgement there will be various stages through which people will pass. At certain stages they will be questioned, whereas at others they will not. The various verses refer to various stages.

Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه that The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made the following comment with regard to the verse, *"By your Lord! We will definitely question each one of them regarding what they used to do."* He said that people will be questioned whether they accepted the kalimah ***"Lā ilāha Illallāh."*** Those who accepted will be asked whether they abided by the covenant that accompanies the declaration i.e. whether they lived their lives according to the dictates of the Shari'ah.

Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever recites ***"Lā ilāha Illallāh"*** with sincerity will enter Heaven *(Jannah).*" Someone asked, "What is meant by sincerity?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "The sincerity of the kalimah is that it prevents the person from Unlawful *(Harām)* acts." [*Muslim v. 1 p.48*]

Sayyidina Sufyān bin Abdullah Thaqafi رضى الله عنه reports that he asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to give him such advice after which he would not have to ask another person. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Say, 'I believe in Allāh' and then be steadfast." i.e. fulfil all the requirements of Belief *(Imān).*

THE COMMAND TO ANNOUNCE THE MESSAGE DISTINCTLY

"Clearly announce what you have been commanded with and ignore the idolaters." *i.e.* Do not be grieved by their rejection but continue in your efforts.

The ignorant sect called the Rawāfidh state that this verse instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمto announce to the people that Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه was to be the Caliph *(khalifa)* immediately after him. However, they say, (Allāh forbid!) that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was too afraid of Sayyidina Abu Bakr

رضی اللہ عنہ and Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and could therefore not make the proclamation. What blasphemy indeed! If the Holy Prophet of Allāh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was afraid of the creation rather than the Creator, who can then be regarded as true to Allāh's commandments? May Allāh save us from their ignorance. Āmīn.

ALLĀH IS SUFFICIENT AGAINST THE MOCKERS

"We will suffice for you against those who ridicule; those who ascribe other gods to Allāh." Although all the polytheists were active in mocking the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, Allāma Kirmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has mentioned that those referred to in the verse were the seven persons who threw dirt on the back or the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم while he was performing Salāh. They were all killed at Badr. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 14 p.86*]

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the verse refers to five persons in particular. They were Walīd bin Mughiera (their leader), Āsim bin Wā'il, Aswad bin Abdul Muttalib, Aswad bin Abdul Mughīth and Hārith bin Qais. Once, while they were making Tawāf of the Ka'ba, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام came to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and asked about Walīd (as he passed by), "How do you find this person?" When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied that he was an evil person, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام pointed to Walīd's leg and said, "You have been protected from him." Walīd was wearing a Yamāni shawl and was dragging his lower garment while walking. He happened to pass by a person from the tribe of Khuzā'ah, who had many arrows lying about. As Walīd passed, an arrowhead pierced his foot. Because of his pride, he did not look down to see what had happened but continued walking. The arrowhead gradually penetrated deeper into his foot, causing great injury. This wound caused him to fall ill, and he eventually died of this wound.

When Āsim bin Wā'il passed by the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم what he thought of him. When the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم replied that he was also an evil person, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام pointed to the soles of Āsim's feet and said, "You will be protected from him." Thereafter, Āsim was once playing with his two sons when he stepped upon a thorny plant in one of the valleys of Makkah. The thorn caused his feet to swell to the size of a camel's neck. This injury resulted in his death.

When Aswad bin Abdil Muttalib passed by, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام posed the same question to the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and received the same reply. Thereto, Jibr'īl علیہ السلام pointed to Aswad's eyes and said, "You will be protected from him." Aswad later became blind and continuously banged his head on the wall shouting, 'The Lord of Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has killed me!" He died in this manner.

When Jibr'īl علیہ السلام asked the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم about Aswad bin Abi Mughīth, he replied, "He is an evil person even though he is the son of my maternal uncle." Jibr'īl علیہ السلام pointed to Aswad's stomach saying, "You will be protected from him." Consequently he died of a stomach illness.

When Hārith bin Qais passed and Jibr'īl علیہ السلام received the same reply to his question, he pointed to Hārith's head saying, "You will be protected from

him." He eventually died after puss flowed ceaselessly from his nose.

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿97﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿98﴾ وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴿99﴾

(97) We know very well that your bosom is constrained by what they say. (98) So glorify the praises of your Lord and be of the ones who prostrate. (99) And worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you.

THE COMMAND TO ENGAGE IN TASBĪH AND TAHMĪD, AND TO WORSHIP ALLĀH UNTIL DEATH

Allāh informs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"We know very well that your bosom is constrained by what they say."* i.e. By their mockery and taunts. As a cure for this, Allāh instructs, *"So glorify the praises of your Lord (recite SubhānAllāh and Alhamdu Lillāh) and be of the ones who prostrate."*

Sayyidina Hudhaifa رضى الله عنه narrates that whenever the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was overcome with any concern, he resorted to Salāh. [*Mishkāt p. 117*]

Sayyidina Jubair bin Nudhair رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have not been commanded to amass wealth and be of the merchants. Instead, this revelation has been sent to me, *"So glorify the praises of your Lord and be of the ones who prostrate. And worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you."* [*Mishkāt p. 444*]

سورة النحل

Makkan	Surah An-Nahl	Verses 128

أَتَىٰٓ أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوهُ ۚ سُبْحَـٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَـٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (1) يُنَزِّلُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةَ
بِٱلرُّوحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِۦ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِۦٓ أَنْ أَنذِرُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱتَّقُونِ
(2) خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ تَعَـٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (3) خَلَقَ
ٱلْإِنسَـٰنَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ (4)

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Allāh's command has arrived, so do not seek to hasten it. He is Pure and Exalted above what they associate as partners to Him. (2) He sends the angels with the revelation of His commands to those bondsmen of His whom He desires. (The revelation is) "Warn that there is no deity besides Myself, so fear Me." (3) He created the heavens and the earth with truth. He is Exalted above the partners that they associate with Him. (4) He created man from a drop of fluid yet man is suddenly an open opponent.

THE ADVENT OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* IS INEVITABLE AND MAN IS A GREAT DISPUTANT

Surah Nahl discusses mostly the Oneness of Allāh and offers proofs for it. It also discusses Allāh's bounties and mentions the bee, called the "Nahl" in Arabic (verses 68 and 69). It is from this that the Surah derives its name.

In the opening verse Allāh says, *"Allāh's command has arrived, so do not seek to hasten it.* "When the polytheists were presented with the message of Islām and warned of the consequences of polytheism *(shirk)*, they laughed it off as a mere threat. They asked why was the punishment not coming. They also said the same about judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

In the above verse Allāh informs them that the advent of His *"command"* i.e. His punishment and judgment *(Qiyāmah)* is so certain that it will not be farfetched to say that it has already arrived.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* and myself have been sent like these two fingers." Saying this he indicated his index and middle fingers. This means that the two are as close as the two fingers are. The middle finger is only slightly longer than the index. [*Bukhari*]

The polytheists refused to believe this and were foolish enough to even pray for judgment *(Qiyāmah)* and punishment. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 2 p.61*) has reported that Nadhar bin Hārith made the statement, *"O Allāh! If this (Islām) really is the truth from You, then shower on us stones from the skies, or afflict us with a painful punishment."* As a result of this absurd request he was killed along with fellow polytheists at Badr.

"He is Pure and Exalted above what they associate as partners to Him." In this portion of the verse Allāh exonerates Himself from all the partners that the polytheists associate with Him.

"He sends the angels [i.e. Jibr'īl عليه السلام] *with the revelation of His commands to those bondsmen of His whom He desires.* (The revelation is) *'Warn that there is no deity besides Myself so fear Me (i.e. fear My punishment if you do not accept the message).*

Thereafter Allāh says, *"He created the heavens and the earth with truth."* The commentary of this has been given under verse 85 of Surah *Hijr (Surah 15). Then* Allāh reiterates, *"He is Exalted above that partners that they associate with Him."*

"He created man from a drop of fluid yet man is suddenly an open opponent." Not realising that he was created from a drop of sperm, man becomes bold enough to argue and altercate against even the commands of Allāh.

Allāh says in Surah Yāssīn, *"Has man not seen that We created him from a seed, after which he is suddenly an open adversary? He coins similitude's for Us and forgets how he was created. He says, 'Who will give life to bones after they have decomposed?'"* [*Surah 36, verses 77, 78*]

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 2 p.62*) reports that the polytheist *(Mushrik)* Ubayy bin Khalaf once brought a decayed bone to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and asked, "Do you say that Allāh will revive this bone after it has decomposed?" The above verse was revealed in reply to his statement. Whatever the circumstances for its revelation, the verse is general in its reference to all disbelievers *(kuffār)* and polytheists who debate about Allāh's religion *(D'īn)*. The Qur'ān mentions many of their arguments and replies to all of them.

Even worse than their contentions are those that certain so-called Muslims make. They make absurd remarks asking why is devil *(Shaytān)* pursuing man and why should they be punished for their sins when fate has already been predestined? Others ask why should they worship Allāh when He does not require their worship. These people should examine their Belief *(Imān)* since they are objecting to the system of Allāh. Such objections lead one to disbelief *(kufr)*.

جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرِيحُونَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ ⑥ وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُوا
بَالِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ الْأَنفُسِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ⑦ وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ
لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً ۚ وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ⑧

(5) And He created the animals for you. In them is warmth for you many other benefits and you even eat of them. (6) In them is beauty for you when you return them in the evenings and when you send them out in the morning. (7) And they carry your burdens to such destinations that you could not reach without great difficulty to yourselves. Without doubt your Lord is the Most Pardoning, Most Merciful. (8) Horses, mules and donkeys are for riding and adornment. And He creates such things about which you have no knowledge.

MAN DERIVES VARIOUS BENEFITS FROM ALLĀH'S BOUNTY OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Of the numerous bounties that Allāh has created for man, are domestic animals which afford man innumerable benefits as Allāh mentions in the foregoing verses. Allāh firstly mentions that their skins and hides provide warmth for man against the cold. Man acquires leather and wool from these animals, using them for his clothing and bedding. He also uses the hides of animals to make tents, as will be mentioned in verse 80 of this Surah. Another great benefit that they give to man is their meat that he eats.

In the next verse Allāh says, *'in them is beauty for you when you return them in the evenings* (from the grazing fields) *and when you send them out in the morning."* Only the owner of a large herd of animals will know the joy and satisfaction he experiences when he observes his animals being taken to the fields daily. He cannot contain his emotions to see them grazing, producing milk and reproducing.

Thereafter Allāh mentions yet another great benefit of these animals. He says, *"And they carry your burdens to such destinations that you could not reach without great difficulty to yourselves."* Through His infinite mercy and compassion, Allāh has created these animals to transport man's goods to distant lands, without which he would be at a total loss. *"Without doubt your Lord is the Most Pardoning, Most Merciful."*

Allāh then speaks of the riding animals when he says, *"Horses, mules and donkeys are for riding and adornment."* The mules and donkeys are also used for transporting loads.

Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"(Allāh) Who created all pairs and made ships and animals, which you ride; that you may be seated on their backs, then recall the bounty of your Lord when you mount and say, 'Pure is Allāh, Who has subjugated this for us whereas we would never have been able to control it. And our return shall certainly be to our Lord."'* A person truly appreciates this control granted by Allāh only when an animal becomes stubborn and uncontrollable.

Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Do they not see that, from Our hand's work, We have*

created animals for them, which they are masters of? We placed these animals at their service, so some of them are their means of transport, while they eat of some. From these animals, they derive many benefits and drinks. Are they not grateful?" [*Surah 36, verses 71-73*]

Note 1: These verses only mention a few of the benefits to be derived from animals. The above verse of Surah Yāsīn, as well as verse 66 of Surah Nahl make mention of the milk that man derives from these animals. Allāh causes it to emerge from between the impurities of blood and flesh. Man also benefits from the hides and bones of these animals. Nowadays their limbs and organs are used even for transplant purposes in medical surgery.

Note 2: Allāh also mentions, *"And He creates such things about which you have no knowledge."* This verse includes all things that are still to be created by Allāh until the day of Judgement. Certain commentators have mentioned that this verse also refers to the modern means of transportation used nowadays. Allāh has perfect knowledge of all of these.

وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ قَصْدُ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَآئِرٌ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَهَدَىٰكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿9﴾

(9) The straight path leads to Allāh and there are those people who deviate from it. If He wills He could guide all of you collectively.

MANY PEOPLE HAVE DEVIATED FROM ALLĀH'S PATH

The verse states that the person who treads the straight path of Islām will attain Allāh's pleasure, whereas all other paths will deviate one from Allāh.

"If He wills He could guide all of you collectively." Allāh has placed guidelines and proofs for all to observe and from which to draw conclusions. Those who ponder over these will be guided to the straight path, but those who are negligent will remain deviant.

Other commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that if Allāh willed He could have forced everyone to be Muslims. However, His wisdom dictated otherwise. Therefore, each will be guided according to his efforts at understanding.

"The straight path leads to Allāh..." Certain commentators have translated this verse to mean that Allāh has assumed the responsibility of guiding towards the straight path. For this reason He has sent the Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures. He will not punish any person until He has shown him the truth. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p.63*]

هُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً ۖ لَّكُم مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿10﴾

يُنۢبِتُ لَكُم بِهِ ٱلزَّرْعَ وَٱلزَّيْتُونَ وَٱلنَّخِيلَ وَٱلْأَعْنَٰبَ وَمِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿11﴾ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ
وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ ۖ وَٱلنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَٰتٌۢ بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ
﴿12﴾ وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ
يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿13﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِي سَخَّرَ ٱلْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا
وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا۟ مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى ٱلْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن
فَضْلِهِۦ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿14﴾ وَأَلْقَىٰ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ رَوَٰسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ
وَأَنْهَٰرًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿15﴾ وَعَلَٰمَٰتٍ ۚ وَبِٱلنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿16﴾

(10) Allāh is the One Who sends rain for you from the sky, which provides (drinking) water and vegetation on which you graze your animals. (11) With it (the rain) Allāh grows for you plantations, olives, dates, grapes and all types of fruit. Undoubtedly there is a sign in this for those who reflect. (12) He placed the night and the day at your service, and the sun and the moon as well. The stars are also in servitude by His command. Indeed there are signs in this for people of understanding. (13) And the things that He has created for you upon the earth have various colours. Surely there is a sign in this for people who take heed. (14) It is He Who subjugated the ocean so that you may eat fresh meat from it and extract jewels that you wear. You see the ships cleaving their way on it so that you may seek from His bounty and show gratitude to Him. (15) He cast mountains upon the earth so that it does not shake with you and (placed) rivers and roads on earth so that you be guided. (16) (And He placed on earth) signs and they are guided by the stars.

THE SIGNS OF ALLĀH IN HIS CREATION

Allāh has described many signs in this Surah. Coincidentally mention was also made of those who accept the message of Belief *(Imān)* and tread the straight path, as opposed to those who do not. The above verses cite some more proofs of Allāh's grandeur.

The first of these is the rain. Allāh says, *"Allāh is the One Who sends rain for you from the sky which provides (drinking) water and vegetation on which you graze your animals."* The rain provides clean unsalted water that is fit for human consumption. The same water is also used to grow vegetation, which sustains man and the animals.

In addition to this, *"With it (the rain) Allāh grows for you plantations, olives, dates, grapes and all types of fruit. Undoubtedly there is a sign in this for those who reflect."*

The second sign mentioned by Allāh is that *"He placed the night and the day at your service..."* Man is able to rest at night and work by day.

The third sign mentioned is the subjugation of *"the sun and the moon as well."*

The heat of the sun serves to warm the earth and allows plants to grow. Besides this there are innumerable other benefits that the sun provides to creation at large. The moon serves to provide light at night and guides travellers on their way.

The fourth sign mentioned by Allāh is that of the stars. Allāh says, *"The stars are also in servitude by His command."* For millions of years the stars have maintained their orbits according to Allāh's decree without wavering in the least. They have no means to propel themselves but travel by the power of Allāh alone.

After mentioning these few signs Allāh says, *"Indeed there are signs in this for people of understanding."*

Thereafter Allāh mentions a fifth sign saying, *"And the things that He has created for you upon the earth have various colours."* Another translation of the verse is that Allāh has created things of different types on earth. These will include every creation of Allāh upon the earth. They are all placed on earth for the service of man. They are used to feed him, to construct his homes, cure his diseases, etc.

Thereafter Allāh reminds man once again, *"Surely there is a sign in this for people who take heed."*

Continuing with the sixth sign Allāh says, *"It is He Who subjugated the ocean..."* In this one bounty alone Allāh mentions three benefits for man. These are:

(1) *"so that you may eat fresh meat from it."* This refers to the fish and multitude of other creation that man is allowed to eat from the seas.

(2) Man can *"extract jewels that you wear."* Allāh say in Surah Rahmān that from the seas *"pearls and corals emerge."*

(3) *"You see the ships cleaving their way on it so that you may seek from His bounty and show gratitude to Him."* These ships, large and small, wind and fuel driven, are used to transport man and merchandise across the world. Man is obliged to express his gratitude to Allāh for all of this, but he is negligent and thoughtless, whiling his time away in trivial pursuits.

The seventh bounty recounted by Allāh is that *"He cast mountains upon the earth so that it does not shake with you..."* Man is weak and will not be able to live on earth if it continues to shake and shudder. Because of His infinite mercy Allāh has placed the mountains as pegs to stabilise the earth so that man is able to live peacefully. One can well imagine the chaos and panic that will be caused if these pegs are removed to cause earthquakes on an international basis. The earthquakes experienced by man are confined to certain areas and do not mean that the mountains are not performing their function.

The eighth sign mentioned by Allāh is that of rivers. Allāh has placed them on earth to provide man and beast with an abundance of good. They provide drinking water, water for irrigation and numerous Other uses. The benefit of

these can be seen from the great rivers of the world that men depend on for their very existence.

The ninth sign that Allāh mentions is that of the roads that He has created. These are found on plains, in mountains, at sea and in the air. Surah Nūh mentions, *"Allāh made the earth a carpet for you so that you may traverse upon the wide roads."*

If it were not for these roads, people would be lost on their journeys. Therefore Allāh says, *"and (placed) rivers and roads on earth so that you be guided."* In addition to this Allāh says, *"(And He placed on earth) signs..."* Each road has certain signs that mark them e.g. a certain tree or mountain, etc.

The tenth sign is mentioned by Allāh when He says, *"and they are guided by the stars."* Navigators determine their direction by the stars.

أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لَّا يَخْلُقُ ۗ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ ۖ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

(17) Is he who cannot create like Him Who can create? Will you not take heed? (18) If you attempt to enumerate Allāh's bounties, you will never be able to do so. Verily Allāh is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful. (19) Allāh knows what you conceal and what you make apparent. (20) Those that you call upon besides Allāh cannot create anything, but they have been created. (21) They are dead without any life. They do not even know when they will be raised.

THE CREATOR AND THE CREATION CAN NEVER BE EQUATED

The previous verses have expounded Allāh's creation as signs of His power. All things, past present and future are Allāh's creation, while the gods worshipped by the polytheists and the disbelievers *(kuffār)* cannot create anything. Allāh says in Surah Luqmān, *"This is Allāh's creation, so show me what those besides Him have created. But the oppressors are in a distant deviation."* [*Surah 31, verse 11*]

Expressing the foolishness of the polytheists, Allāh says, *"Is he who cannot create like Him Who can create? Will you not take heed?"*

Allāh then says, *"If you attempt to enumerate Allāh's bounties, you will never be able to do so. Verily Allāh is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* Allāh has granted man all his faculties, especially that of intelligence. This he should utilise to recognise Allāh by observing His signs. In return for all these bounties man should at least show gratitude to Allāh and worship only Him. Through His grace Allāh even provides these bounties for the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the polytheists.

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that none can truly thank Allāh sufficiently for all the bounties conferred by Him. However, Allāh is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful and will overlook this deficiency in man. He will forgive all sins and reward a person for every iota of good that he does.

"Allāh knows what you conceal and what you make apparent." Those people who do not show gratitude to Allāh and continue to perpetrate evil should not think that they can escape Allāh forever when He does not punish them in this world.

Allāh then says, *"Those that you call upon besides Allāh cannot create anything, but they have been created."* The creation is not worthy of being worshipped. Further describing them Allāh says, *"They are dead without any life. They do not even know when they will be raised."* The greatest bounty of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be realised only when people are resurrected after death. However, these false gods are unable to inform when this will take place, let alone being of any assistance then. The knowledge of judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is only with Allāh.

إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مُّنكِرَةٌ وَهُم مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾ لَا
جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾
وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُم مَّاذَا أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۙ قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ
كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۙ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُم بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا
يَزِرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

(22) Your deity is but One Deity. The hearts, of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter are reluctant and they are haughty. (23) Without any doubt Allāh knows what they conceal and what they reveal. Indeed He does not love the proud ones. (24) When they are asked, "What has your Lord revealed?" they reply, "Tales of the old people." (25) So that they may carry their entire burdens on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) together with the burdens of those whom they mislead without knowledge. Evil indeed is the burden that they bear.

YOUR LORD IS ONE AND HE KNOWS WHAT YOU HIDE AND WHAT YOU REVEAL

After refuting the false gods of the polytheists, Allāh declares, *"Your deity is but One Deity* (therefore only He should be worshipped). *The hearts of those who disbelieve in the Hereafter are reluctant (to believe) and they are haughty."* Their pride prevents them from accepting the truth.

"Without any doubt Allāh knows what they conceal and what they reveal. Indeed He does not love the proud ones." Allāh shall punish the disbelievers *(kuffār)* for the wrong beliefs that they hold even though they do not express these to anyone.

Allāh continues, *"When they are asked, 'What has your Lord revealed?' they reply, 'Tales of the old people."* Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has reported that this verse was

revealed with reference to the Polytheists of Makkah. They stood by the roads leading to Makkah and whenever the arriving pilgrims would ask what was revealed by Allāh to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they would say that these were nothing but tales of the old folk.

In this manner they attempted to mislead others as well. For this reason Allāh says that they do this *"So that they may carry their entire burdens on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) together with the burdens of those whom they mislead without knowledge. Evil indeed is the burden that they bear."* They will suffer for their own sins as well as for the sins of the people they misled.

Allāh say in Surah Ankabūt, *"They will certainly carry their own burdens in addition to those of others. And they will definitely be questioned about what they fabricated."* [*Surah 29, verse 13*]

قَدْ مَكَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَى ٱللَّهُ بُنْيَـٰنَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ
ٱلسَّقْفُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَىٰهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ ثُمَّ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ
يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ كُنتُمْ تُشَـٰٓقُّونَ فِيهِمْ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟
ٱلْعِلْمَ إِنَّ ٱلْخِزْىَ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَٱلسُّوٓءَ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّىٰهُمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِىٓ
أَنفُسِهِمْ فَأَلْقَوُا۟ ٱلسَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِن سُوٓءٍۭ بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌۢ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٢٨﴾ فَٱدْخُلُوٓا۟ أَبْوَٰبَ جَهَنَّمَ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

(26) Those before them certainly plotted, but Allāh demolished their building from the foundation, causing the roof to cave in on them from above. And the punishment came to them from whence they could not perceive. (27) Then He shall humiliate them on the Day of Qiyamāh (Judgement) and ask, "Where are those partners of Mine that you used to argue about?" Those who are granted knowledge will say, "Today humiliation and misfortune are certainly upon the disbelievers!" (28) Those whose souls were claimed by the angels while they oppressed themselves. They will then propose a truce (saying) "We never perpetrated any evil!" "Nay! Allāh is well aware of what you used to do." (29) "Enter the doors of Hell to abide therein forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the proud ones!"

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS AND THE PLIGHT OF THE HAUGHTY ONES ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

Referring to the evil plots of the polytheists against Islām and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Those before them certainly plotted, but* (as if their plots were a building) *Allāh demolished their building from the foundation, causing the roof to cave in on them from above. And the punishment came to them from whence they could not perceive."* This verse is general in its context and does not refer to any specific nation only.

However, Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" and the author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl". have all reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the verse refers to Nimrūd bin Kan'ān. He was the king of Babylon and constructed a palace that measured 5000 arm-lengths in height and 3000 in width. He intended to reach the heavens, learn of the happenings there and fight all those present there. Allāh sent a wind that razed the building to the ground, crushing Nimrūd and all his accomplices with him.

According to other narrations, Nimrūd survived but was later destroyed by a mosquito that Allāh caused to reach his brain. Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has also mentioned that this verse refers to the disbeliever *(kāfir)* king Bukht Nasr (Nebuchadnezzar, who built a palace like the one described above.

All these narrations have their sources from the Bani Isra'īl. If they have any truth, they will resemble the statement of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* when he instructed his vizier saying, *"O Hāmān, build a tower for me so that I may reach the roads; the roads of the heavens so that I can have a close look at the deity of Mūsa. I strongly feel that he is a liar."* His plan failed and Hāmān was also destroyed.

Referring to the previous nations Allāh says in Surah Fajr, *"Allāh rained the whip of punishment on them."* [*Surah 89, verse 13*]

After inflicting a punishment on them Allāh say, *"Then He shall humiliate them on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) and ask, 'Where are those partners of Mine that you used to argue about?' Those who are granted knowledge will say, 'Today humiliation and misfortune are certainly upon the disbelievers; those whose souls were claimed by the angels while they oppressed themselves.'"* These people lived and died as disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* will seek to escape from Hell and will call for intercessors. They will also plead to Allāh to return them to this world so that they may do good deeds. At times they will also deny their crimes. Allāh refers to this when He says, *"They will then propose a truce (saying) 'We never perpetrated any evil!'"* Their plea is referred to as a *"truce"* because a truce is normally proposed to alleviate a difficulty.

In reply to their plea, Allāh will say, *"Nay! Allāh is well aware of what you used to do."* They will then be commanded, *"Enter the doors of Hell to abide therein forever. Evil indeed is the abode of the proud ones!"*

۞ وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ قَالُوا خَيْرًا ۗ لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةٌ ۚ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۚ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا تَجْرِي مِن
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَجْزِي اللَّهُ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ
الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۙ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(30) Those who abstained from disbelief (kufr) and polytheism (shirk) are asked, "What has your Lord revealed?" They reply, "Extreme good." There shall

be goodness for those who did good works in this world and the home of the Hereafter is certainly best. How grand is the home of the pious! (31) They will enter gardens of eternity beneath which rivers flow. There they shall have whatever they desire. In this manner does Allāh reward those who adopt piety (taqwa)... (32) ... Those whose souls the angels claim while they are pure. They say, "Peace be upon you. Enter Heaven (Jannah) because of the deeds that you performed.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF THE PEOPLE OF PIETY *(TAQWA)* THEY WILL ENTER THE GARDENS OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* AND HAVE ANYTHING THAT THEY DESIRE

The above verses speak about the opposite of the previous verses. In these verses Allāh describes the condition of the pious people in the Hereafter. Allāh says that *"They will enter gardens of eternity beneath which rivers flow. There they shall have whatever they desire."* Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"In Heaven (Jannah) there shall be whatever the heart desires and whatever pleases the eye."*

"In this manner does Allāh reward those who adopt piety (taqwa)" piety (taqwa) means performing all good deeds and abstaining from all evil.

Allāh then describes the death of the people who adopt piety *(taqwa)*. Allāh says that they are *"Those whose souls the angels claim while they are pure."* Their hearts are free of disbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)*, being illuminated with the light of Belief *(Imān)* and decorated with good deeds. Treating them with honour, the angels will say to them, *"Peace be upon you. Enter Heaven (Jannah) because of the deeds that you performed."* Although they will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* only after judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, the angels give them the glad tidings of their entry to Heaven *(Jannah)* at the time of their deaths.

Verse 24 above speaks about the disbelievers *(kuffār)* *"When they are asked, 'What has your Lord revealed?' they reply, 'Tales of the old people."*

Now Allāh speaks of the pious people in the same light when He says,

"Those who abstained from disbelief (kufr) and polytheism (shirk) are asked, 'What has you Lord revealed?' They reply, 'Extreme good."

Commentators have mentioned that the two verses were revealed because of the same circumstances, as mentioned in the commentary of the first verse. A similar narration also passed in the commentary of verse 90 of Surah Hijr, where Allāh says, *'As We have revealed to the dividers..."* The polytheists of Makkah stood by the roads leading to Makkah and whenever the arriving pilgrims would ask what was revealed by Allāh to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they would say that these were nothing but tales of the old folk.

However, when these pilgrims posed the same question to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, they would reply that Allāh had revealed extreme good and virtue. Hearing this they would be satisfied and return with the good news to their tribes.

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَن تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ أَوْ يَأْتِىَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتُ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا۟ بِهِۦ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

(33) They are waiting only for angels to come to them or for the order of their Lord to come. Those before them behaved in the same way. Allāh did not oppress them but they oppressed themselves. (34) So they received the punishment of their evil deeds and their mockery engulfed them.

THE REJECTORS ARE MERELY AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF ANGELS

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* refused to accept the clear and apparent proofs that were presented to them. It seemed that they were waiting for some extraordinary event to convince them. Allāh says, *"They are waiting only for angels to come to them or for the order of their Lord to come* i.e. they are awaiting their deaths. However, belief *(Imān)* will not be accepted then.

Allāh continues to say, *"Those before them behaved in the same way."* They also remained adamantly upon disbelief *(kufr)* until Allāh destroyed them. Allāh says, *'Allāh did not oppress them but they oppressed themselves. So they received the punishment of their evil deeds and their mockery engulfed them."*

A similar verse is found in Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"They await Allāh and the angels to come to them beneath the shadow of clouds, and all matters are decided. All matters return unto Allāh."* [*Surah 2, verse 210*]

Allāh says in Surah Ān'ām, *"They wait only for the angels to come to them or for your Lord to come or for some signs of your Lord to appear. The day when one of your Lord's signs will appear, the belief (Imān) of a person will not benefit him if he had not believed previously or carried out any good in his belief Say, 'Keep waiting! We are also waiting."* [*Surah 6, verse 158*]

وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا۟ لَوْ شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَىْءٍ نَّحْنُ وَلَآ ءَابَآؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن دُونِهِۦ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ فَهَلْ عَلَى ٱلرُّسُلِ إِلَّا ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلطَّٰغُوتَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَى ٱللَّهُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ ٱلضَّلَٰلَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَٱنظُرُوا۟ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِن تَحْرِصْ عَلَىٰ هُدَىٰهُمْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِى مَن يُضِلُّ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

(35) The idolaters say, "If Allāh willed then neither us, nor our forefathers

would have worshipped anything besides Him, and we would never have forbidden anything without Him. Those before them behaved in the same manner. The responsibility of the messengers is only clear propagation. (36) Indeed We have sent a messenger among every nation (who told them) that "Worship Allāh and shun the Satan (Shaytān)." There were those of them whom Allāh had guided and those for whom deviation had been decreed. So travel in the land and see what was the consequence of those who denied. (37) If you are desirous of their guidance, then Allāh surely does not guide those whom He has sent astray, and they shall have no helpers.

THE ARGUMENT OF THE POLYTHEISTS AND THE FACT THAT EVERY NATION HAD A MESSENGER

When the polytheists were presented with the message of Belief *(Imān)*, they would challenge the Prophets عليهم السلام to reply to their argument. They said that since everything occurred with Allāh's will, their polytheism *(shirk)* and evil must also be desired by Allāh if He had willed it all along. They deduced from this that their actions must be correct for if it were not pleasing to Allāh, He would not have granted them the ability to carry them out.

A similar contention has been discussed in verse 148 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*). There Allāh says, *"Soon those who commit polytheism (shirk) will say, 'If Allāh willed, neither we, nor our forefathers would not have committed polytheism (shirk), and we would not have forbidden anything.' In the same manner those before them had denied until they tasted Our punishment. Say, Have you any knowledge that you may disclose for us? You only follow conjecture and speculation."*

Although nothing can occur without Allāh's permission, this does not mean that He is pleased with the actions that He allows man to do. Granting man the ability to perform an act will not indicate that Allāh likes the act. Allāh has granted man this life on earth *"to test who of you performs the best deeds."* It is for this reason that Allāh allows man the choice of deeds. When he chooses which course of action to take, Allāh grants him the ability to perform the deeds of his choice. If people were forced to perform certain actions, there would not have been any test for man at all.

"Those before them behaved in the same manner. The responsibility of the messengers is only clear propagation." Allāh sent the Prophets عليهم السلام to guide man and to show him what is required from him. However, many people chose not to respond to the preaching of the Prophets عليهم السلام. They adhered to their practices of polytheism *(shirk)* and resorted to arguing with the Prophets عليهم السلام, as mentioned above.

"Indeed We have sent a messenger among every nation (who told them) that 'Worship Allāh and shun the Satan (Shaytān)." After the Prophets عليهم السلام had passed on the message, people were divided into two groups. These were, as Allāh mentions, *"those of them whom Allāh had guided and those for whom deviation had been decreed."* These people refused to accept the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام. As a result, they were destroyed. Therefore Allāh says, *"So travel in the land and see what was the consequence of those who denied."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had the fervent desire in his heart that all of

mankind accepts his message. However, Allāh did not will this to happen for reasons that conform to His perfect wisdom. For this reason Allāh informs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"If you are desirous of their guidance, then Allāh surely does not guide those whom He has sent astray, and they shall have no helpers (against Allāh's punishment in the Hereafter)."*

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ بَلَىٰ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾ إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَن نَّقُولَ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٠﴾

(38) They swear solemn oaths by Allāh that Allāh will never resurrect the dead. Nay! It is indeed a resolute promise that Allāh has pledged, but most people do not Know. (39) So that Allāh may expound to them the matters in which they differed, and so that the disbelievers may come to know that they were liars. (40) When We intend anything, all We have to do is say, "Be!" and it is.

THE REJECTERS SWEAR THAT ALLĀH WILL NEVER RESURRECT THE DEAD. ALLĀH REFUTES THEM BY SAYING THAT ALL HE HAS TO DO TO BRING SOMETHING INTO EXISTENCE IS TO SAY, "BE!"

While the previous verse discussed the plight of those polytheists who rejected oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and refused to accept the preaching of the Prophets عليهم السلام, the above verses discuss those people who rejected the belief in resurrection. Not only did they refuse to believe but they were bold enough to *"swear solemn oaths by Allāh that Allāh will never resurrect the dead."*

Allāh replies by saying, *"Nay!* (Your oaths are futile because) *It is indeed a resolute promise that Allāh has pledged (that He will resurrect the dead), but most people do not know."*

It is a fact that Allāh will certainly raise the dead and gather them all before Him. The reason for this will be *"So that Allāh may expound to them the matters in which they differed, and so that the disbelievers may come to know that they were liars."* They will realise that all they said against the Prophets عليهم السلام and their preaching were lies. They will then learn that the truth is what the Prophets عليهم السلام had preached to them.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* think that it is difficult for Allāh to resurrect the dead but they do not realise that every task is extremely simple for Allāh. Allāh says, *"When We intend anything, all We have to do is say, 'Be!' and it is."* Allāh has created everything the first time and is perfectly able to reproduce the same a second time. It is strange that even the disbelievers *(kuffār)* admit that Allāh had created everything the first time, yet they express astonishment at the fact that He will resurrect the same creation on the Day of Judgement.

Allāh says in Surah Qāf, *"Did We get tired with the first creation? Nay, but they are in doubt concerning the new creation."* A verse in Surah Yāsīn reads, *"Say, 'The One Who gave life to it (decomposed bones) the first time will revive it. He has knowledge of all things.'"* The use of the word "Kun!" ("Be!") was discussed in the commentary of verse 117 of Surah Baqarah.

وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا۟ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَلَأَجْرُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا۟ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

(41) As for those who migrate for Allāh after being oppressed, We shall certainly settle them in a pleasant abode on earth. The reward of the Hereafter is greater, if only they knew. (42) (These are) those who are patient and rely only on their Lord.

THE PROMISE OF BLISS IN BOTH WORLDS FOR THOSE WHO MIGRATE IN ALLĀH'S WAY

The polytheists of Makkah constantly harassed the Muslims since many of the new Muslims were people of lower social standing. As a result of this persecution, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم granted the Muslims permission to migrate to Abysinnia. However, when they began to live peacefully there, the Makkans sent some delegates to deceive the king of Abysinnia into deporting them back to Makkah.

When these people told the king that the Muslims were runaways and traitors to the religion *(D'īn)* of their forefathers, the king summoned the Muslims to his court. Sayyidina Ja'far رضى الله عنه addressed the king and explained to him how they were once a depraved and corrupt nation. He told the king that Allāh then sent His beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to remove them from the abyss of spiritual depravity. He then informed the king of how they were persecuted when they chose to follow the guidance of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He also recited Surah Maryam to the king.

The king and his courtiers were impressed by what they heard and permitted the Muslims to live safely in their country. Of this group of Muslims, many returned to Makkah and later migrated to Madinah, but others remained there and migrated to Madinah directly from Abysinnia in the 8th year after Hijrah. There they were reunited with the other Muslims who emigrated from Makkah.

Some of them emigrated twice to Abysinnia, returned to Makkah, and then migrated to Madinah from there. All these emigrations were undertaken to escape the oppression of the polytheists. Regarding these immigrants Allāh says, *"As for those who migrate for Allāh after being oppressed, We shall certainly settle them in a pleasant abode on earth."* Consequently, they were granted safety in Madinah and Abysinnia.

Describing those who migrate Allāh says, *"Those who are patient and rely only on their Lord." In* addition to the rewards of this world for their tremendous

sacrifice of wealth and family, Allāh shall grant them the superior rewards of the Hereafter.

Allāh says, *"The reward of the Hereafter is greater if only they knew."* This phrase could refer to the disbelievers *(Kuffār)*, meaning that if they perceived these rewards, they too would accept Islām and migrate for Allāh's pleasure.

Other commentators have mentioned that this phrase refers to the immigrants themselves. This would mean that if they actually saw the rewards that are in store for them they would excel in making sacrifices for the religion *(D'īn)* and will be pleased to know that they were able to endure the difficulty of migration. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 14 p. 146*]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِمْ فَسْـَٔلُوٓا۟ أَهْلَ ٱلذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلزُّبُرِ وَأَنزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ٱلذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

(43) Before you We sent only men as messengers, sending revelation to them. So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know. (44) (We sent these messengers) with clear proofs and books. We have revealed the Qur'ān to you so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them, and so that they may reflect.

THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم SO THAT HE MAY EXPLAIN IT TO THE PEOPLE

There was no surprise in the fact that Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a human to the people of Makkah, even though they thought it strange (because they felt that an angel ought to be sent as a Prophet). Allāh says that the fact of the matter is that *"Before you* [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *We have sent only men as messengers, sending revelation to them."* This was best suited to the needs of the people.

Allāh then adds, *"So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know."* The polytheists of Makkah regarded the Jews and the Christians as knowledgeable people since they possessed the knowledge of the previous scriptures. The Makkans travelled biannually to Syria (a Christian country then), where they met many Christians and Jews. They even met many Christians monks who lived en route to Syria. They were also in contact with the Jews of Madinah. It is for this reason that Allāh informs them to ask these people whether they deemed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was on the right path, or whether they (the Polytheists) were on the right. (This was discussed in the commentary of verse 51 of Surah Nisā).

Allāh also prompts them to enquire from the Jews and Christians whether the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were humans or angels.

"(We sent these messengers) with clear proofs and books." Besides this

interpretation, other commentators have mentioned that the verse should be translated as *"(With what were these messengers sent? They were sent) with clear proofs and books."*

Another group of commentators maintains that this verse is an extension of the opening verse i.e. *"Before you* [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] *We have sent only men as messengers, sending revelation to them together with clear proofs and books."*

Other commentators state that the verse should read as follows: *"[We have sent you, O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم] *with clear proofs and a book."* According to this interpretation, the ensuing phrase of the verse will be a follow-up to this phrase.

A REFUTATION TO THOSE WHO DENY THE AHADĪTH

"We have revealed the Qur'ān to you so that you may explain to the people what has been revealed to them..." This verse emphasis that fact that the responsibility of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم entailed more than the mere conveyance of the Qur'ān. This verse clearly rebuffs the preposterous claim of many irreligious people who claim (Allāh forbid!) that the status of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is no more than that of a postman. They say that his responsibility was merely to bring the Qur'ān to people, after which people are at liberty to interpret the Qur'ān according to their own understanding.

By saying this, these people have removed a large chunk of the religion *(D'īn)*. The Qur'ān makes brief references to many Islāmic practices, while the Ahadīth is much more detailed and explicit. Therefore, they have to be followed if one wishes to practice upon the Dīn properly.

Allāh commands people in various verses to follow the guidelines shown by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Say, 'If you love Allāh then follow me. Allāh will love you and forgive your sins."* Allāh says in Surah Ahzāb

"There is definitely an excellent example in Allāh's messenger for the one who fears Allāh and the Last Day, and remembers Allāh abundantly."

It is impossible to practise the Qur'ān without consulting the Ahadīth. While the Qur'ān mentions that the face, arms and feet should be washed and the head moistened [ablution *(wudhu)*] before performing Salāh, it does not mention how many times these should be washed, nor does it state when the ablution *(wudhu)* will be broken.

In a similar way, the Qur'ān emphasises the performance of Salāh but does not furnish details about the number of Rakāhs to be performed, the times of Salāh, the number and manner of kneeling *(Ruku)* and prostration *(Sajdah)*, where to place the hands or where to look.

The Qur'ān mentions the obligation of hajj and Umrah. However, the Qur'ān does not stipulate the date of hajj, the number of times to pass between Safa and Marwa, what is to be done during these acts, etc.

Similarly, the Qur'ān does not delve into the details of Nikāh, Diyah *(blood money)*, retaliation *(Qisās)* and capital punishment. Although the Qur'ān ordains

that the hand of a thief should be cut, it does not mention exactly from where should it be cut, for what amount of money stolen it needs to be cut, what will be done should a person repeat the crime of stealing, etc.

In a like manner, many other injunctions of religion *(D'īn)* are detailed in the Ahadīth, without which it will be impossible to practise the Shari'ah. Allāh has sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain and expound to man the details that the Qur'ān does not mention. In this way the religion *(D'īn)* has been perfected.

People who claim to derive the practices of religion *(D'īn)* directly from Qur'ān without requiring the Ahadīth do not even know the basics of the Arabic language. They do not even come close to understanding the intricacies of Arabic eloquence, syntax, philology and grammar. Drowning in their deviation, they seek to drag others in with them.

In fact, the person who denies the authority of the Ahadīth is actually denying the Qur'ān itself, since the Qur'ān instructs that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم be followed.

The reality of the situation is that the Jews, the Christians and the other enemies of Islām have initiated this movement to refute the Ahadīth. In this way they are using unwary Muslims to further fuel their attacks against Islām and the Muslims.

Allāh says further that he has revealed the Qur'ān *"......so that they may reflect."* The advices, narratives, discussions and admonitions in the Qur'ān have been revealed so that people may take heed of them and be rightly guided.

أَفَأَمِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَكَرُوا۟ ٱلسَّيِّـَٔاتِ أَن يَخْسِفَ ٱللَّهُ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ (45) أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ فِى تَقَلُّبِهِمْ فَمَا هُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ (46) أَوْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ عَلَىٰ تَخَوُّفٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ (47)

(45) Do those who plot evil schemes feel assured that Allāh will not plunge them into the earth or afflict them with a punishment from whence they do not perceive? (46) Or that He may seize them in their activities, after which they will have no escape? (47) Or that He seizes them with a gradual depletion? Without doubt your Lord is Most Pardoning, Most Merciful.

THE OBSTINATE ONES SHOULD NOT FEEL THAT THEY ARE SAFE FROM ALLĀH'S PUNISHMENT

Allāh explains in these verses how their meagre riches and comforts in this world deceive the disbelievers *(kuffār)* into thinking that they are safe from Allāh's punishment. Allāh is perfectly able to cause the earth to swallow them up and punish them even while they are walking and talking in this world. Allāh can also punish them by way of *"a gradual depletion."* This means that Allāh can cause their numbers, their animals and their wealth to gradually diminish until

they are left totally helpless and forlorn.

Despite His ability to do all of this, Allāh reminds people that *"Without doubt your Lord is Most Pardoning, Most Merciful."* Because of His infinite mercy and grace, He does not punish them immediately, but allows them respite so that they may repent.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ مِن شَىْءٍ يَتَفَيَّؤُا ظِلَٰلُهُۥ عَنِ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَٱلشَّمَآئِلِ سُجَّدًا لِّلَّهِ
وَهُمْ دَٰخِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ
وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ۩ ﴿٥٠﴾

(48) Do they not see the things that Allāh has created, the shadows which sway to the right and the left, submitting to Allāh in humility? (49) To Allāh's command submits all within the heavens and the earth, including all creatures and angels, and they are not proud. (50) They fear the authority of their Lord and do as they are commanded.

ALL CREATION ARE SUBSERVIENT TO ALLĀH

Depicting His supremacy and Mastery over the creation, Allāh asks, *"Do they not see the things that Allāh has created, the shadows of which sway to the right and the left, submitting to Allāh in humility?"* All the creation and their shadows act according to Allāh's commands. He decrees their movements and activities.

Allāh's sovereignty is only confined not to these thongs and their shadows, but *"To Allāh's command submits all within the heavens and the earth, including all creatures and angels, and they (the angels) are not proud. They fear the authority of their Lord and do as they are commanded."*

Allāh determines the length and duration of the shadows, as Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"Do you not see how your Lord spreads the shadow? If He willed, He could have made it stationary. We then appoint the sun as a sign to it and We then gradually withdraw it towards Ourselves."* [*Surah 25, verses 45, 46*]

We know that the shadows of objects extend and contract with relation to the position of the sun. However, it should be borne in mind that Allāh controls the movement of the sun. If Allāh wills that any shadow should remain stationary or that it be totally obliterated, He can do so without anyone to prevent Him.

Allāh clearly mentions in these verses that all within the heavens and the earth are subservient to Him. In Surah Hajj , Allāh specifically mentions the submission of the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the mountains and animals when He says, *"Do you not see that all within the heavens and the earth prostrate to Allāh, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the beasts and many people."*

Together with these, Allāh speaks of the obedience of the angels. He says that they *"are not proud. They fear the authority of their Lord and do as they are*

commanded." Allāh mentions in verse 172 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*), *"Masīh is never ashamed to be a slave of Allāh, neither are the favoured angels. Whoever is ashamed of worshipping Him and is haughty, Allāh shall soon gather them all to Him."*

The more a being recognises Allāh, the more will he worship and submit to Allāh. Therefore, the angels will be exceedingly obedient to Allāh since they truly recognise His grandeur and authority.

Note: Instead of taking the literal meaning of prostration, commentators have interpreted verse 49 to mean that all things submit to Allāh. This is so because the prostration of all these creation is not apparent to people. In fact, even prostration stems from submission. Submission encompasses the act of prostration as well.

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوٓا۟ إِلَٰهَيْنِ ٱثْنَيْنِ ۖ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَإِيَّٰىَ فَٱرْهَبُونِ ﴿51﴾ وَلَهُۥ مَا
فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ ٱلدِّينُ وَاصِبًا ۚ أَفَغَيْرَ ٱللَّهِ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿52﴾ وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ
ٱللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْـَٔرُونَ ﴿53﴾ ثُمَّ إِذَا كَشَفَ ٱلضُّرَّ عَنكُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ
مِّنكُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿54﴾ لِيَكْفُرُوا۟ بِمَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُمْ ۚ فَتَمَتَّعُوا۟ ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿55﴾

(51) Allāh said, "Do not take two deities. He is but One Deity, so fear Me only." (52) To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth and obedience is exclusively for Him. Do you fear any other besides Allāh? (53) Every bounty that you possess is from Allāh, so appeal only to Him when any difficulty afflicts you. (54) When He removes the difficulty from you, suddenly a group from you ascribes partners to their Lord. (55) ".....so as to reject the bounties granted to them. Let them enjoy. Soon they will come to learn.

THERE IS ONLY ONE DEITY ALL BOUNTIES ARE FROM HIM AND ONLY HE SHOULD BE FEARED

Allāh declares in the first verse, *"Do not take two deities. He is but One Deity, so fear Me only. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth and obedience is exclusively for Him. Do you fear any other besides Allāh?"* These verses serve to remind man that only Allāh is worthy to be worshipped since he Alone is the Creator and Master of all. Allāh is totally Independent and the polytheism *(shirk)* perpetrated by the polytheists cannot harm Allāh in the least.

Allāh then says, *"Every bounty that you possess is from Allāh, so appeal only to Him when any difficulty afflicts you."* Everyone realises that none can avert difficulties besides Allāh. It is therefore foolish to worship anyone besides Him.

"When He removes the difficulty from you, suddenly a group from you ascribes partners to their Lord so as to reject the bounties granted to them." It is indeed a great form of ingratitude that people utilise the bounties granted by Allāh to disobey Him. As was mentioned in Surah Ān'ām, the polytheists used to set aside a portion of their sustenance provided by Allāh for their idols.

By carrying out these actions, they are inviting Allāh's punishment. Therefore, Allāh says, *"Let them enjoy. Soon they will come to learn."* They will see the error of their ways when their souls depart from their bodies and then again in the Hereafter.

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيبًا مِّمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ ۗ تَٱللَّهِ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿56﴾ وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ ٱلْبَنَٰتِ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ ۙ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿57﴾ وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِٱلْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُۥ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿58﴾ يَتَوَٰرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ مِن سُوٓءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِۦٓ ۚ أَيُمْسِكُهُۥ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُۥ فِى ٱلتُّرَابِ ۗ أَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ ﴿59﴾ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ مَثَلُ ٱلسَّوْءِ ۖ وَلِلَّهِ ٱلْمَثَلُ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿60﴾

(56) And they assign a portion of what We have given them to that which they do not know. By Allāh! You shall certainly be questioned regarding what you used to fabricate. (57) They assign daughters unto Allāh. Allāh is Pure! Yet they have for themselves what they desire. (58) When any of them is given the glad tidings of a daughter, his face darkens and he suppresses his fury. (59) He hides from the people because of the evil tidings that he received. Must he keep her with disgrace or bury her in the sand? Evil indeed is the decision that he takes! (60)Evil is the condition of those who are not convinced of the Hereafter, while Allāh's are the most sublime attributes. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

THE POLYTHEISTS ASSIGN DAUGHTERS TO ALLĀH AND SONS TO THEMSELVES, YET THEIR FACES DARKEN WHEN A DAUGHTER IS BORN TO THEM

One of the practices of polytheism *(shirk)* that the polytheists carried out was that they used to *"assign a portion of what We have given them to that which they do not know."* i.e. to their idols. The discussion of this has passed in the commentary of verse 136 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*), where Allāh says, *"A portion of their crops and animals that Allāh created, they stipulated for Allāh saying, 'This is for Allāh,' according to their estimation, 'and this is for our partners.' So what becomes their partners' does not reach Allāh and what becomes Allāh's reaches their partners. Evil indeed is what they decide."*

Allāh continues in the above verses by saying, *"By Allāh! You shall certainly be questioned regarding what you used to fabricate." Allāh mentions about this in Surah An'ām, "Soon He will punish them for what they devise."*

While the Jews and the Christians ascribed sons to Allāh (Sayyidina Uzair and Isā عليه السلام respectively), the polytheists used to say that the angels are Allāh's daughters. Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"It is not befitting of Rahmān to take children."*

Bukhari *(v. 2 p.744)* reports that Allāh says, *"Man has sworn Me. His swearing is that he says that Allāh has children, whereas I am Independent. I beget not, nor was I*

begotten and there is none like Me."

Although the polytheists did not like to have daughters for themselves, they chose to attribute daughters to Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"Or has Allāh chosen daughters from His creation and selected you to have sons? When any of them is given the tidings of that which they ascribe to Rahmān, his face darkens as he suppresses his emotions. (Do they ascribe to Allāh) one who is brought up in jewellery and who cannot make herself clear in disputes? And the angels, who are Allāh's bondsmen, they make into females. Did they witness the creation of the angels? Their testimony will certainly be recorded and they will be questioned."*

Therefore, Allāh says, *"They assign daughters unto Allāh. Allāh is Pure! Yet they have for themselves what they desire."*

Regarding their aversion for daughters, Allāh says, *"When any of them is given the glad tidings of a daughter, his face darkens and he suppresses his fury. He hides from the people because of the evil tidings that he received."* He does not want anyone to ask him the gender of the child born to him. Thereafter he thinks to himself, *"Must he keep her with disgrace or bury her (alive) in the sand?"*

The polytheists used to bury their little daughters alive and even boast to others about his vile crime. Allāh says in Surah Takwīr, *"When the girl who was buried alive will be asked for what crime was she killed."* [*Surah 81, verse 8, 9*]

Before the advent of Islām, women were scorned at and were totally disregarded, as is clearly depicted by the vile deed of burying little girls alive. Some cults practise similar forms of discrimination even today as is witnessed by their practice of burning a woman alive after her husband has died.

Islām granted honour and status to women by recognising their rights and attaching great rewards to the act of rearing children. It is indeed tragic that, because of their lack of understanding, women have succumbed to the ploys of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and stripped themselves of all modesty and respect. They roam around like models, living a life of immorality and look for friends instead of husbands.

Regarding the decision the polytheist (Mushrik) takes to bury his daughter alive, Allāh says, *"Evil indeed is the decision that he takes!"*

"Evil is the condition of those who are not convinced of the Hereafter..." They live in ignorance and foolhardiness in this world and will suffer untold misery and suffering in the Hereafter. On the other hand, *"Allāh's are the most sublime attributes. And He is the Mighty, the Wise."* All the most excellent qualities belong to Allāh Alone and none can match these.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلنَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِم مَّا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِن دَآبَّةٍ وَلَٰكِن يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿61﴾ وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا
يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ ٱلْكَذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلنَّارَ

وَأَنَّهُم مُّفْرَطُونَ ﴿62﴾ تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ
أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿63﴾ وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ إِلَّا
لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلَّذِى ٱخْتَلَفُوا۟ فِيهِ ۙ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿64﴾ وَٱللَّهُ أَنزَلَ مِنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿65﴾

(61) If Allāh were to take people to task for their injustice, He would not have left upon the earth a single creature, but He grants them respite until an appointed term. When their term expires, they will not be able to reprieve it for a moment, nor advance it. (62) They assign to Allāh what they dislike, while their tongues make the false claims that they shall receive goodness. Without doubt they shall have the Fire, and they will be the first to be condemned. (63) By Allāh! We have definitely sent messengers to the nations before you and Satan *(Shaytān)* beautified their actions for them. So he shall be their companion today and theirs will be an excruciating punishment. (64) We have sent the Book to you so that you may explain to them the matter in which they differ, and as a guidance and a mercy for the believers. (65) Allāh sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death. There is certainly a sign in this for those who will listen.

IF ALLĀH WERE TO TAKE PEOPLE TO TASK FOR THEIR INJUSTICE, THERE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN A SINGLE CREATURE LEFT ON EARTH

It is the practice of Allāh that He does not punish people immediately for their sins. Rather, He grants them reprieve until a fixed period. However, when their period expires, they cannot postpone nor prepone the period for even a moment. Allāh refers to this when He says, *If Allāh were to take people to task for their injustice, He would not have left upon the earth a single creature, but He grants them respite until an appointed term. When their term expires, they will not be able to reprieve it for a moment, nor advance it."*

Allāh then says, *"They assign to Allāh what they dislike* (i.e. daughters), *while their tongues make the false claims that they shall receive goodness."* Despite their evil, they claim that Allāh is pleased with them and that He will continue to bless them.

There are also those disbelievers *(kuffār)* who believe in the Hereafter, like some Hindus. If the verse refers to them, it will mean that they claim that they will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* after death. According to other commentators, even those who did not believe in the Hereafter used to say that if it is assumed that judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will ever occur, then we will be entered into Heaven *(Jannah)*.

Refuting their claim, Allāh says, *"Without doubt they shall have the Fire, and they will be the first to be condemned."*

Allāh then continues to say, *"By Allāh! We have verily sent messengers to the*

nations before you and Shaytān beautified their actions for them." They chose rather to follow the bidding of Satan *(Shaytān)* and reject the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام. In this verse Allāh is telling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the previous Anbiya عليه السلام were patient in the face of this rejection, therefore he should also exercise the same fortitude as they did.

Because the disbelievers *(kuffār)* chose the companionship of Satan *(Shaytān)* in this world, *"he shall be their companion today (on the Day of Judgement) and theirs will be an excruciating punishment."*

"We have sent the Book to you so that you may explain to them the matter in which they differ..." People have always differed about many things and they all considered themselves to be correct. They differed in matters of Lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām)*, Belief *(Imān)* and disbelief *(kufr)* and many other such matters. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent to draw the distinction between right and wrong so that they would know the truth of every matter.

The Qur'ān was also sent as *"a guidance and a mercy for the believers."* Although the Qur'ān is for humanity at large, the *"believers"* are specifically mentioned here because they are the ones who accept its advice and admonitions.

Just as Allāh has mentioned that the Qur'ān is a spiritual elixir, He mentions thereafter a physical form of nutrition. Allāh says, *"Allāh sends rain from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death."* Just as the rain causes parched land to bear vegetation of all types, the Qur'ān causes dead and diseased hearts to be revived and illuminated. In this way the Qur'ān serves as spiritual nutrition for the soul, just as the rain provides nutrition for man's physical body.

"There is certainly a sign in this for those who will listen." Those people who heed the advice of the Qur'ān shall benefit by it.

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا
لِلشَّارِبِينَ ﴿66﴾ وَمِنْ ثَمَرَاتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنَابِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا إِنَّ
فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿67﴾ وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ
الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿68﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ
بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿69﴾
وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا إِنَّ
اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿70﴾

(66) There is certainly a lesson for you in the animals. From what is in their bellies between excrement and blood, We give you pure milk to drink that is easily consumed. (67) We provide for you from the fruits of the date palm and vines, and you make "sakar" and good food from these. Indeed there is a sign in

this for those who understand. (68) Your Lord inspired the bee to construct homes in the mountains, the trees and in the buildings erected by man... (69) Then eat from every type of fruit and traverse the pathways of your Lord that have been made easy (for you to travel on). A drink of varying colours emanates from its belly, in which lies a cure for man. Indeed in this is a sign for those who ponder. (70) Allāh created you and will then claim your souls. There are those of you who will be returned to a worthless age so that he knows nothing after once possessing knowledge. Undoubtedly Allāh is All Knowing, All Powerful.

THERE ARE LESSONS FOR MAN IN THE ANIMALS AND IN THE BEE

After mentioning the bounty of rain in the previous verses, Allāh now recounts certain other bountiful drinks that He has conferred on man. Referring to milk, Allāh says, *"There is certainly a lesson for you in the animals. From what is in their bellies between excrement and blood, We give you pure milk to drink that is easily consumed."*

From the grass and fodder that animals eat, blood, dung and milk are produced within their bellies. The milk emerges pure and clean without a trace of the blood and dung that are so close to it. Allāh's immense power can be ascertained from this phenomenon. Infant and adult alike drink the milk easily, which provides them with perfect nourishment.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p.75*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that when an animal eats grass and digests it, dung is formed at the bottom of the belly, milk in the centre and blood at the top. Then the liver carries out its task by Allāh's command. The blood is transfused through the blood vessels, the milk emerges from the udders and the dung is excreted.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "When any of you eats, he should recite, 'O Allāh! Bless us in this (food) and feed us better than this.' When he drinks milk he should say, 'O Allāh! Bless us in this (milk) and increase us therewith." This is so because milk is the only thing that serves as food and drink." [*Abu Dawūd v. 2 p.168*]

After milk, Allāh mentions dates and grapes. He says, *"We provide for you from the fruits of the date palm and vines, and you make 'sakar' and good food from these."* Some commentators have translated the word "sakar" as "intoxicants." Since this Surah was revealed in Makkah prior to the abolition of intoxicants, the objection cannot be raised with regard to fact that it seems inappropriate that a Unlawful *(Harām)* substance is mentioned as a bounty. At the time when this verse was revealed, liquor was still not abolished. Since liquor was soon to be abolished, the verse does not laude any praises upon these intoxicants.

According to a narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, *'sakar'* may be translated in the Abysinnian language as 'vinegar.' According to other commentators, the word may be translated as 'tasty things.'

Allāh then declares, *"Indeed there is a sign in this for those who understand."*

"Your Lord inspired the bee to construct homes in the mountains, the trees and in the buildings erected by man..." This refers to the construction of hives in which the

bees store honey. Allāh also inspired the bee further by telling it, *"Then eat (suck) from every type of fruit and traverse the pathways of your Lord that have been made easy (for you to travel on)."* Allāh had created these pathways in the atmosphere so that the bees may easily find their way back to their hives.

"A drink (honey) *of varying colours emanates from its belly, in which lies a cure for man. "* Not only is honey palatable and nourishing, it also serves as a cure for many ailments. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Grab hold of two cures. Honey and the Qur'ān." [*Mishkāt p. 391*]

The sick should be given honey to drink and the Qur'ān should be recited, where after the reciter should blow on them. Experience has proven that the recitation of any long or short Surah of the Qur'ān serves as a cure for the sick.

Some Sahabah رضى الله عنه were once passing a place when the chief of the village was bitten by a venomous reptile. When the people approached the Sahabah رضى الله عنه for a cure, one Sahabi رضى الله عنه recited Surah Fāthihā and blew on the bite. The leader was then completely cured and (in the words of the narrator) he appeared like a person who was freed after being shackled. [*Bukhari v. 1 p.304*]

Allāh then says, *"Indeed in this is a sign for those who ponder."*

"Allāh created you and will then claim your souls. There are those of you who will be returned to a worthless age so that he knows nothing after once possessing knowledge." The wealth of intelligence and memory that Allāh blesses people with and which they exploit to the limits during their youth is taken away during old age.

Allāh is capable of dealing with people as He pleases for *"Undoubtedly Allāh is All Knowing, All Powerful."*

وَٱللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي ٱلرِّزْقِ ۚ فَمَا ٱلَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا۟ بِرَآدِّى رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَآءٌ ۚ أَفَبِنِعْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَٰجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَزْوَٰجِكُم بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ ۚ أَفَبِٱلْبَٰطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ ٱللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ رِزْقًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾ فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

(71) Allāh has given some of you preference over others in sustenance. Now those who have been granted preference will not give their provision to their slaves so as to make them all equal. Will they still refute Allāh's favour? (72) Allāh has made spouses for you from yourselves and, from these spouses, created sons and grandsons. And He has provided for you pure foods to eat. Will they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude to Allāh's favour? (73) They

worship besides Allāh things that cannot provide any sustenance for them from the skies, nor from the earth. In fact, they too are incapable of it. (74) So do not cite similitude's about Allāh. Allāh knows and you do not know.

ALLĀH HAS FAVOURED SOME MORE THAN OTHERS IN PROVISION

"Allāh has given some of you preference over others in sustenance." Allāh has granted every person a different amount of wealth and riches. If everyone were to be as rich or as poor as the other, this world will fail to function. The system of employment and production would cease because none would require the other. In this way man will be deprived of the fruits of his own labour, together with depriving others as well.

In the present system all men are interdependent. One will require another to run his factory, while the other will require the money of the first person to see to his personal needs. In this way the two will need each other and each one will have his requirement satisfied. Consumers need suppliers and vice versa. Each would be at a loss without the other. In this manner, the system of the world continues to function.

Allāh then says, *"Now those who have been granted preference will not give their provision to their slaves so as to make them all equal."* Here Allāh reproaches the Polytheists. Allāh informs them that just as they do not make their slaves their equals and as they recognise the distinction between master and slave, they should recognise the even sharper distinction between the Creator and the creation (the True Master and His slaves). However, they are absurd enough to ascribe others as equal to Allāh!

"Will they still refute Allāh's favour?" Although Allāh granted them all that they possess, they worship others instead of Him. This is the worst of crimes.

Thereafter Allāh mentions the boon of spouses and children. Allāh says, *"Allāh has made spouses for you from yourselves* (i.e. from the human race) *and, from these spouses, created sons and grandsons."* Man then takes pride in his progeny. Together with this bounty *"He has provided for you pure foods to eat."*

Allāh then says, *"Will they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude to Allāh's favour?"* It is indeed foolish and unmannerly that they worship other gods when Allāh grants them all they possess.

"They worship besides Allāh things that cannot provide any sustenance for them from the skies, nor from the earth. In fact, they too are incapable of it." This verse also highlights the foolishness of the polytheists because instead of worshipping Allāh their Creator and Sustainers, they worship those things that cannot provide anything for them.

"So do not cite similitude's about Allāh." Certain commentators have interpreted this verse to mean that people should not portray any semblance and representation of Allāh based on their knowledge of worldly things. This is especially forbidden when such examples of Allah support the idolatrous beliefs of the polytheists *(Mushrikīn)*.

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that people should not take any other god as the example and duplicate of Allah, thinking that they have any of Allāh's qualities. The verse will then contain the same message as the verse, *"Do not ascribe partners to Allāh."*

"Allah knows and you do not know." It is foolish to base one's concept of Allah upon one's knowledge of the creation. Allāh knows best what is the reality of His supreme attributes. He is also well aware of the actions of the polytheists *(Mushrikīn)* and will punish them accordingly.

۞ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَّمْلُوكًا لَّا يَقْدِرُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَمَن رَّزَقْنَاهُ مِنَّا رِزْقًا حَسَنًا
فَهُوَ يُنفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا ۖ هَلْ يَسْتَوُونَ ۚ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٧٥﴾ وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَبْكَمُ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ
كَلٌّ عَلَىٰ مَوْلَاهُ أَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّههُّ لَا يَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ ۖ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي هُوَ وَمَن يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ ۙ
وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

(75) Allāh cites the example of a slave in bondage who has no power to do anything. Another is one whom Allah has granted a fair provision and he spends from it secretly and openly. Can the two be equal? All praise be to Allāh, but most people do not know. (76) And Allāh cites the similitude of two persons. The one is dumb and is a burden to his guardian. Wherever he is sent, he does not bring any good. Can he be equal to the one who enjoins justice and is upon the straight path?

ALLĀH CITES TWO ILLUSTRATIONS TO REFUTE THE BELIEFS OF THE POLYTHEISTS

In the above verses Allāh presents two analogies. The first is that of a slave. He has no wealth and can therefore not benefit anyone financially. The other is a person whom Allāh has blessed with an abundance of wealth. He spends this wealth on people as and when he pleases. Any sane person will realise that these two persons can never be equal. It is therefore obvious that Allāh, Who has control over all affairs and possesses all wealth, can never be equated with any of the creation. The creation, even collectively, cannot do what Allāh does.

This illustration clearly depicts the reality of the matter. Any thinking person will perceive the error of polytheism *(shirk)* by pondering over them. The only exceptions will be those who blindly follow the deviate ways of their forefathers, or who refuse to accept the truth for fear of losing some worldly benefits. Therefore, it is obvious that *"All praise is for Allāh."*

The second example given by Allāh is that of a person who is dumb. This mute person cannot care even for himself, let alone be of service to others. Allāh says, *"Wherever he is sent, he does not bring any good."* Neither can he understand what he is being told, nor can he convey the message to the opposite party.

Allāh then says, *"Can he be equal to the one who (has the ability to speak so that he) enjoins justice..."* Besides being able to convince others, he also practises what he preaches because he is *"upon the straight path."* Again the reply is obvious that the second person is better. If a person can understand this, he can easily understand that no being (especially lifeless idols) can ever be equated to Allāh.

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَآ أَمْرُ ٱلسَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ ٱلْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (77)

(77) To Allāh belongs the unseen affairs of the heavens and the earth. The affair of judgment day (Qiyāmah) is just like a blink of the eye, or even closer. Verily Allāh has power over all things.

After explaining some proofs pertaining to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Allāh affirms His all-encompassing knowledge. He says that he possesses the knowledge of every detail in the universe, whether it is apparent to man or not.

The knowledge of the advent of judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is exclusive to Allāh and it will appear as quickly as the *"blink of the eye, or even closer."*

"Verily Allāh has power over all things." This phrase refutes the surprise that certain disbelievers *(kuffār)* express at the advent of resurrection. Allāh informs them that there is no cause for surprise because nothing is impossible for Him. Allāh has mentioned this belief in judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* because it is necessary that one believes in this aspect together with belief in oneness of Allāh *(T uhīd)*.

وَٱللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّنۢ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمْعَ
وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ وَٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةَ ۙ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ (78) أَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱلطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍ
فِى جَوِّ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (79)
وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۢ بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن جُلُودِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ بُيُوتًا
تَسْتَخِفُّونَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ إِقَامَتِكُمْ ۙ وَمِنْ أَصْوَافِهَا وَأَوْبَارِهَا وَأَشْعَارِهَآ
أَثَٰثًا وَمَتَٰعًا إِلَىٰ حِينٍ (80) وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلَٰلًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ
ٱلْجِبَالِ أَكْنَٰنًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ سَرَٰبِيلَ تَقِيكُمُ ٱلْحَرَّ وَسَرَٰبِيلَ تَقِيكُم
بَأْسَكُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهُۥ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْلِمُونَ (81) فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟
فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْبَلَٰغُ ٱلْمُبِينُ (82) يَعْرِفُونَ نِعْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنكِرُونَهَا وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ
ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ (83)

(78) Allāh removed you from the wombs of your mothers when you knew nothing, and bestowed you with ears, eyes and hearts so that you may be grateful. (79) Have they not seen the birds subjugated in mid-air? Only Allāh suspends them in the air. Indeed there are signs in this for the believers. (80) And Allāh has granted you an abode in your homes and made homes for you from the hides of animals, which you find light when you travel and when you pitch camp. There is furniture and other things (derived) from their wool, their fur and their hair, which profit (you) for a period. (81) Of the things that Allāh has created, He has made those things that provide shade. He has also made for you places of refuge in the mountains and made coats for you that protect you from the heat and coats that protect you in battle. Thus does He complete His bounty on you so that you may surrender. (82) If they turn away, then your only responsibility is clear propagation. (83) They recognise Allāh's bounty. yet they refute it. And most of them are ungrateful.

THE VARIOUS BOUNTIES OF ALLĀH

Allāh mentions numerous bounties and signs depicting oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* in the foregoing verses. These are:

(1) "Allāh removed you from the wombs of your mothers when you knew nothing (thereafter, He granted you intelligence and knowledge), and bestowed you with ears, eyes and hearts so that you may be grateful (by worshipping only Him)."

(2). *"Have they not seen the birds subjugated in mid-air? Only Allāh suspends them in the air."* The birds seem not to be affected by the force of gravity exerted by the earth. By the mere movement of their wings, they are able to manoeuvre in the sky with great ease. Man cannot achieve this' feat by flapping his arms, even if he attaches feathers to them.

Despite this weakness of man, Allāh has granted him the intelligence and ability to create such machines with which he can outstrip any bird in flight, altitude and distance together with carrying tons of goods with him. It is indeed the bounty of Allāh that he has placed the control of these massive machines at the control of a single pilot. Allāh then reminds man, *'indeed there are signs in this for the believers."*

(3) "And Allāh has granted you an abode in your homes..." Some homes are constructed from bricks, others from sand, others from rocks, while some are even made of ice. The roofs are also made from various materials, all of which have been created by Allāh.

Allāh has also *"made homes for you from the hides of animals, which you find light when you travel and when you pitch camp.* "In this verse Allāh refers to tents which man uses-these on his travels, making the journey easy and convenient.

(4) *"There is furniture and other things (derived) from their wool, their fur and their hair, which profit(you) for a period."* If Allāh

had willed, He could have made the skins of animals impossible to remove, or He could have made them without wool and hide. If this were the case, man would not have derived the benefits from them that he does.

(5) *"Of the things that Allāh has created, He has made those things that provide shade."* These include a wide range of things like the trees, mountains and buildings.

(6) *"He has also made for you places of refuge in the mountains..."* This refers to caves, caverns and homes that are carved out of mountains.

(7) *"...and made coats for you that protect you from the heat..."* Allāh has created the materials required for making clothing, like cotton, wool, etc. Plastic, nylon and other modern day materials are all derived from natural substances created by Allāh. Allāh has mentioned that He has also created those things *"that you have no knowledge of"* Therefore, whatever new discoveries and inventions may occur in the future are all from Allāh.

Although Allāh has only mentioned that He has created apparel to protect man from the heat, Scholars *(Ulama)* explain that protection from cold has not been mentioned because it is automatically understood from the mention of heat.

Other commentators state that protection from cold has not been mentioned in this verse because it is already mentioned in verse 5 *of* this Surah, where Allāh mentioned, *"And He created the animals for you. In them is warmth for you, other benefits and from them do you eat."*

Allāh continues to say that He created for man the essentials to make *"coats that protect you in battle."* This refers to coats of armour and other protective clothing used in warfare. At the end of this verse Allāh says, *"Thus does He complete His bounty on you so that you may surrender."*

"If they turn away, then your only responsibility is clear propagation." This verse exhorts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to grieve over the disbelief of the disbelievers *(Kuffār)*, but to continue with his task of propagation.

"They recognise Allāh's bounty, yet they refute it. And most of them are ungrateful." The greatest form of ingratitude is disbelief *(kufr)*. The disbelievers *(Kuffār)* refuse to submit to Allāh despite the fact that He provides for them and showers them with innumerable bounties.

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ وَإِذَا رَءَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَإِذَا رَءَا الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا شُرَكَاءَهُمْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شُرَكَآؤُنَا الَّذِينَ كُنَّا

نَدْعُوا۟ مِن دُونِكَ ۖ فَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَيْهِمُ ٱلْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَـٰذِبُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾ وَأَلْقَوْا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ ٱلسَّلَمَ ۖ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَصَدُّوا۟ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ زِدْنَـٰهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ ٱلْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يُفْسِدُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾ وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِم مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ ۚ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ تِبْيَـٰنًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

(84) The day when We shall raise a witness from every nation, then the disbelievers will not be granted permission, nor will they be allowed to satisfy Allāh. (85) When the oppressors see the punishment it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be granted respite. (86) When the idolaters will see their partners, they will exclaim, "O our Lord! These are our partners that we used to worship instead of You." Then the word will be flung back to them that "You are definitely liars!" (87) They will propose a truce with Allāh on that day and whatever they used to fabricate will be lost to them. (88) For those who disbelieve and forbid (others) from Allāh's path, We shall add punishment to their punishment because of the corruption that they caused. (89) The day when We shall raise against every nation a witness from their midst, and We shall make you witness over them. We have revealed the Book to you, that explains all things to you and is a guidance, a mercy and a glad tiding for those who submit.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THE PUNISHMENT THAT THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* AND THE POLYTHEISTS WILL SUFFER

Allāh says, *"The day when We shall raise a witness from every nation..."* These witnesses will be the Prophets عليهم السلام who will testify to the disbelief *(kufr)* and evil deeds of the people. Allāh continues to say, *"then the disbelievers will not be granted permission (to plead their case and make excuses), nor will they be allowed to satisfy Allāh."* The opportunity to please Allāh is granted only in this world, not in the Hereafter.

"When the oppressors see the punishment it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be granted respite. When the idolaters will see their partners (their false gods), they will exclaim, 'O our Lord! These are our partners that we used to worship instead of You.' Then the word will be flung back to them that 'You are definitely liars! "' The same gods that they worshipped will call them liars, thereby exonerating themselves from them.

Qurtubi (*v. 10 p.163*) writes that Allāh shall grant the idols the power to speak. They will inform those who worshipped them that they lied when they called them (the idols) gods. These idols will admit to the people that they were helpless, adding that they never instructed that they be worshipped.

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and polytheists will realise that they cannot

escape from the punishment of Hell, they will plead to Allāh to save them and will be prepared to do anything in return. However, it will be too late. They had already destroyed their opportunities in this world by denying the Prophets عليهم السلام and their teachings. Allāh says, *"They will propose a truce with Allāh on that day and whatever they used to fabricate will be lost to them."* Their false gods will not be able to help them at all.

Allāh then speaks of the intensified punishment of Hell when He says, *"For those who disbelieve and forbid (others) from Allāh's path, We shall add punishment to their punishment because of the corruption that they caused."*

"The day when We shall raise against every nation a witness from their midst, and We shall make you witness over them." As was discussed in Surah Baqarah , the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will be summoned as witnesses to the testimony of the Prophets عليهم السلام against their respective Ummahs. Thereafter, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself will testify to the veracity of his Ummah. According to other commentators, this verse means that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will testify to the truthfulness of the other Prophets عليهم السلام.

"We have revealed the Book (Qur'ān) to you, that explains all things to you..." The Qur'ān contains all the guidelines and fundamental principles of religion *(D'īn)*, while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained the details of these. Adherence to the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been ordained in the Qur'ān itself. Allāh says, *"Say, 'Obey Allāh and the messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم.'"* [*Surah Āl Imrān (2), verse 32*]

Allāh says in another verse, *"Whoever obeys the messenger has obeyed. Allāh and whoever turns away, We have not sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] as a warder over them."* [*Surah Nisā (4), verse 80*]

Another verse reads, *"Hold fast to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents you."* [*Surah Hashar (59), verse 7*]

Allāh says in verse 115 of Surah Nisā (Surah 4), *"Whoever opposes the messenger after the guidance has become manifest to him and follows a path other than that of the believers, We shall allow him to do that which he is doing and then enter him into Hell. It is the worst of abodes."* This verse explains the importance of adhering to Ijmā (consensus of the Ummah). It is binding on every Muslim to follow the laws derived by the Sahabah رضى الله عنه and the true scholars after them regarding current matters. They based their analogies upon the guidelines taught by the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth.

It is not permissible to draw analogies and formulate laws when such laws have been clearly defined in the Qur'ān. This will only be done when the Qur'ān and the Sunnah do not contain clear injunctions with regard to a particular matter because the matter at hand is something that is new.

The Qur'ān states, *"Ask those of knowledge if you do not know."* This verse teaches us to refer to men of knowledge when we have no knowledge regarding any affair. It is therefore necessary that people refer to the scholars of religion *(D'īn)*, especially the eminent jurists, when they require to know something about religion *(D'īn)*.

Thereafter, Allāh mentions another few attributes of the Qur'ān. He says that it is also *"a guidance, a mercy and a glad tiding for those who submit."* Those who submit (i.e. the Muslims) receive these benefits from the Qur'ān because they practise the injunctions of the Qur'ān, thereby becoming truly worthy of the bounties of the Hereafter.

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِٱلْعَدْلِ وَٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ وَإِيتَآيِٕ ذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ ٱلْفَحْشَآءِ وَٱلْمُنكَرِ وَٱلْبَغْىِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾ (90)

(90) Verily Allāh instructs justice, "ihsān," and giving to relatives. And Allāh forbids lewdness, evil and oppression. He advises you so that you may take heed.

THE COMMAND TO PERFORM GOOD DEEDS AND THE PROHIBITION AGAINST EVIL AND IMMORALITY

The above verse is extremely concise, yet it encompasses all good deeds and forbids practically all that is undesirable. The first instruction given in this verse is to practise justice. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah , *"Be just! It is closer to piety."* A Muslim has to be just with his pīrs (*mentors*), his superiors and his subordinates. He also has to be just when dealing with his enemies. He cannot transgress their rights and should rather forgive them for the transgressions that they perpetrate against him.

Another meaning of the Arabic word *'Adal'* (*justice*) is 'moderation.' A discussion of moderation is given in the commentary of verse 142 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"Thus we have made you such a group that is moderate in nature..."* According to the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni", 'moderation' refers to the midpoint between the extremes of negligence and excessive behaviour.

Ibn Abi Hātim رحمة الله عليه has reported from Muhammad bin Ka'b Qurazi رحمة الله عليه that Sayyidina Umar bin Abdūl Aziz رحمة الله عليه asked him what was the meaning of 'adal.' He replied, "You have indeed asked something very great!" He then went on to explain the meaning by saying, "(Adal means) That you are the father of a small person, the son of a big person and the brother of a moderate person. You punish people according to their crimes and according to the tolerance of their bodies, and you should not lay a single lash out of anger. If you do so, you will be perpetrating an injustice."

Sayyidina Sufyān bin Uyaynah رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that 'adal' means that a person's actions be equal in public and in private.

The second command that Allāh issues is that of 'ihsān.' It means that a person carries out all actions properly and with care. He should ensure that his acts of devotion as well as his dealings with people are decorated with the quality of ihsān. One should refer to the commentary of the verse 195 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"Do things well, for certainly Allāh loves those who do things well."*

The third command issued by Allāh is to spend on one's relatives. Although

this act is also included in the instruction of 'ihsān,' it is repeated because of the fact that a person will receive double the reward for spending on his family and relatives as opposed to when he spend on others. He will receive the reward of joining family ties in addition to the reward of spending in charity.

This verse also serves to remand those who maintain favourable relationships with everyone except their relatives. The relatives will include all family members, be they as close as one's parents or as far as one's cousins. At times it is obligatory to spend on them and at times it will be optional. The details can be found in the books of Islāmic jurisprudence.

After commanding that the above virtues be practised, Allāh forbids certain vices. The first of these is the prohibition against lewdness. Although this will be included in the general meaning of the word *"evil'* it is mentioned separately for emphasis. This includes all deeds and talks that are rude, immoral and related to sensuality. All those actions that lead to these are similarly prohibited.

The word *"oppression"* includes all those deeds and actions that constitute injustice, including rebellion against the Leader of believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*, stealing, harming parents or refusing people their rights.

Allāh says in Surah Hujurāt, *"If two groups of believers fight each other then reconcile between them. If the one group transgresses against the other then fight that (transgressing) group until they return to Allāh's command. If they return, then reconcile between them with justice. Be just, for Allāh loves those who exercise justice."* [*Surah 49, verse 9*]

Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that from all sins, those that most deserve their perpetrator to be swiftly punished in this world are oppression, transgression and the severance of family ties. [*Mishkāt p. 420*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the above verse is most comprehensive in mentioning good and evil as opposed to any other verse of the Qur'ān. This is so because it enjoins every good and forbids every evil.

At the end Allāh says that *"He advises you so that you may take heed."* This reminds people that they should not consider themselves absolved of responsibility by merely reciting the verse. They should now practise it.

THE INTRODUCTION INTO THE SERMON *(KHUTBAH)* OF THE VERSE,

> *'Verily Allāh instructs justice, "ihsān", and giving to relatives. And Allāh forbids lewdness, evil and oppression. He advises you so that you may take (heed)?'*

Allāma Suyuti رحمة الله عليه has recorded in his book "Tārikhul Khulafa" that the Caliphs *(Khalifahs)* of the Umayyad dynasty used to revile Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه in the Friday sermon *(khutbah)*. However, when Sayyidina Umar bin Abdil Aziz رحمة الله عليه assumed the reigns of Caliphate *(khilāfah)*, he forbade all his governors from doing this and ordered them to substitute this practice with the

above verse of the Qur'ān.

Since then it has been the practice of people throughout the world to include this verse in the Sermon *(khutbah)*. However, it is advisable to omit the verse from the Sermon *(khutbah)* occasionally so that people do not regard it as a compulsory practice.

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدتُّمْ وَلَا تَنقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ
اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّتِي
نَقَضَتْ غَزْلَهَا مِن بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ أَنكَاثًا تَتَّخِذُونَ أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ أَن
تَكُونَ أُمَّةٌ هِيَ أَرْبَىٰ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَبْلُوكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهِ ۚ وَلَيُبَيِّنَنَّ لَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا
كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن
يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ
دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَتَذُوقُوا السُّوءَ بِمَا صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ
وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

(91) Fulfil Allāh's pledge when you have made the pledge. And do not breach your oaths after solemnising them, when you have already made Allāh Witness upon yourselves. Indeed Allāh knows what you do. (92) Do not be like the woman who shredded her spun yarn to threads after strengthening it. You make your oaths a means of causing strife between you because a nation is larger in number than another. The fact of the matter is that Allāh only tests you by it. And, on the Day of Judgement, He will certainly explain to you the matters in which you differed. (93) If Allāh willed, He would have made you a single nation but He sends astray whomsoever He wills and guides whomsoever He wills. You will definitely be questioned concerning what you do. (94) Do not make your oaths a means of causing strife between you, so as to make a foot slip after gaining stability, and so as to make you taste the punishment of forbidding from Allāh's path. Yours shall be an intense punishment. (95) Do not procure a paltry sum in exchange for Allāh's covenant. What Allāh has is better for you if you but knew.

THE INSTRUCTION TO FULFIL PLEDGES AND OATHS

Although the fulfilment of oaths and covenants is included in the previous command of 'adal' and 'ihsān,' it is mentioned separately in these verses so that people realise their importance and pay heed to them. Oaths are usually taken when a pledge is made, and these pledges can result in spreading strife and corruption. It is for this reason that Allāh says, *"Do not make your oaths a means of*

causing strife between you..."

Allāh says, *"Fulfil Allāh's pledge when you have made the pledge."* This refers to the pledge of Islām i.e. submission to Allāh's commands and abstaintion from the things that He has prohibited.

"And do not breach your oaths after solemnising them..." Although it is imperative that even those pledges be fulfilled that have not been solemnised by means of an oath, the solemnised ones are specifically mentioned here for emphasis. They should be given due regard since Allāh's name has been placed between.

".....when you have already made Allāh a Witness upon yourselves. Indeed Allāh knows what you do." When an oath is taken, the parties have intentionally made Allāh a Witness to their pledge, even though Allāh is always a Witness to everything.

Other commentators have translated the verse to mean that Allāh is a Protector over you (instead of *"Witness upon yourselves")*. They interpret the verse to mean that by taking the pledge and abiding by it, they will remain in Allāh's protection. However, should they fail to observe the clauses of the pledge, Allāh's protection is no longer binding: Now He may punish them for the breach of pledge or forgive them.

"Do not be like the woman who shredded her spun yarn to threads after strengthening it." According to the commentators, this verse is mentioned as an example of those who breach their pledges. Their act is just as foolish as the woman who destroys the garment that she made after working hard at spinning the yarn and preparing it. Qurtubi (*v. 10 p.171*) reports that there was a woman in Makkah by the name of Rabīta who used to do what is described in the verse.

In my humble opinion, the verse alludes to many laws besides that of breaking a pledge. It could refer to abruptly terminating one's Salāh, fast, Hajj or Umrah after beginning these. It could also refer to deserting the battlefield in Jihād. In this manner it could also refer to many other deeds. At the same time it could also refer to perpetrating those actions that cause the reward of other deeds to be destroyed. I have searched other books of exegesis *(tafsīr)* for the interpretation that I have made, but have not found this anywhere. I have written it here considering it to be from the inspiration received from Allāh. All knowledge belongs to Allāh.

"You make your oaths a means of causing strife between you because a nation is larger in number than another." It was customary among the Arab tribes that they used to enter into treaties with other tribes so that the two would be allied to each other in times of war. However, when any tribe felt that their allied tribe was too small, it would annul the treaty and align itself with a larger tribe. Allāh refers to the oath taken when aligning to the first (smaller) tribe as an oath that is *"a means of causing strife between you."*

"The fact of the matter is that Allāh only tests you by it" i.e. Allāh tests you by commanding you to fulfil your pledges, or (according to other commentators) He tests you by presenting another stronger tribe before you. In this way Allāh will see whether you remain true to your original allies or whether you desert them

to join forces with a stronger tribe.

Note: A treaty may be annulled with another party when it is feared that they may be treacherous, or for any another valid reason. However, there are conditions attached to this. These have been mentioned in the commentary of verse 58 of Surah Anfāl (*Surah 8*), where Allāh says, *"Should you ever really fear betrayal from any nation, then throw back the treaty that you have contracted with them so that the two of you are on an equal footing. Verily Allāh does not like those who betray."*

Allāh continues to say, *"And, on the Day of Judgement, He will certainly explain to you the matters in which you differed."* In the Hereafter, Allāh will immensely reward those who stood for the truth, while the others will suffer punishment. They will then come to know who were right and who were not.

"If Allāh willed, He would have made you a single nation, but He sends astray whomsoever He wills and guides whomsoever He wills." Allāh could have ironed out all difference between people if He wished to do so. However, His infinite wisdom dictates that these should exist between man. Now man has been bestowed with the intelligence to discern between right and wrong. Accordingly, he has been given the choice to act. He will be taken to task for the choice that he makes. None should consider himself to be like a paralysed person who is helpless to act.

"You will all definitely be questioned concerning what you do." None should think that his actions go unnoticed in this world. Every person will be accountable for his actions. He will have to reply for the pledges that he broke and the oaths that he did not fulfil.

"Do not make your oaths a means of causing strife between you, so as to make a foot slip after gaining stability, and so as to make you taste the punishment of forbidding from Allāh's path. Yours shall be an intense punishment." By breaching the covenant taken with Allāh and His the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, a person will become a infidel *(kāfir)*, and will be worthy of the worst of punishments. If he breaks a pledge with another person, he will be guilty of treachery and betrayal. Although this will not amount to disbelief *(kufr)*, yet it is extremely grave and a really tragic *"slip of the foot"*.

The believers *(Mu'minīn)* should ensure that they never cause their foothold in Islām to slip. They should never fall into the pits of sin and vice and thereby subject themselves to the worst punishments in the Hereafter.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p.84*) has reported from certain Scholars *(Ulama)* that the interpretation of the verse is that when people break covenants, they pave the way for others to do the same. By doing this they will be actually forbidding others from Allāh's way i.e. from fulfilling pledges. It is for this reason that they will *"taste the punishment of forbidding from Allāh's path."*

"....so as to make a foot slip after gaining stability..." Explaining this part of the verse, some commentators have mentioned that betrayal after swearing by Allāh and causing strife jeopardise the belief *(Imān)*. People stand to lose their Belief *(Imān)* by using Allāh's name to deceive others.

Note: In other parts of the Qur'ān Allāh has also emphasised the

importance of fulfilling pledges. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"O you who believe, fulfil your pledges..."*

He says in Surah Ān'ām, *"Fulfil the covenant of Allāh."* Verse 34 of Surah Isrā (*Surah 17*) reads, *"And fulfil the pledge. Certainly, questioning shall take place concerning pledges."*

Allāh then says, *"Do not procure a paltry sum in exchange for Allāh's covenant. What Allāh has is better for you if you but knew."* This verse prohibits that one acquires some worldly benefit by breaking his pledges, especially when it involves accepting bribes and ill-gotten wealth. [*Qurtubi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the giver of a bribe, the taker, and the one who communicates between the two are all accursed. Even the salaries of those who accept bribes for favours done in their field of work is Harām. This is so because they are acting contrary to what they are employed to do, thereby being unworthy of the remuneration they receive from their employers.

In our times, politicians are renowned for breaking promises once they ascend to their desired posts. Even Muslim politicians are prone to this. When they attain to positions they forget the oaths that they swore by Allāh while campaigning. Their concern then is only for themselves.

It should be borne in mind that the wealth acquired by breaching an oath is totally insignificant in comparison to the rewards of the Hereafter. The greater the position of a person, the greater will he suffer for breaking his pledge in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "On the Day of Judgement every traitor will have a flag. The length of his flag will be proportionate to extent of his treason, and it will stand out of his anus. No treason can be worse than that which is perpetrated by a leader against his subjects."

Sayyidina Ma'qal bin Yasār رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh will make Heaven *(Jannah)* Unlawful *(Harām)* for the person who dies in the condition that he betrays people after being appointed as their leader."

According to another narration, the person who is appointed as leader to even a few persons without seeing to their welfare will be deprived of smelling the fragrance of Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*Mishkāt p. 321*]

مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ بَاقٍ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿96﴾ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُۥ حَيَوٰةً
طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿97﴾

(96) What is with you shall come to an end and what is with Allāh will last forever. We shall most definitely reward those who are patient for the good

deeds that they do. (97) As for that male or female who does good and is a believer, We will certainly grant them a good life and most reward them for the surely good that they do.

THE BOUNTIES OF THE HEREAFTER ARE PERPETUAL WHILE THOSE OF THIS WORLD ARE TEMPORARY

In the first verse Allāh explains that whatever man earns in this world shall eventually terminate. On the other hand, the rewards that he will receive for his good deeds in the Hereafter will never come to an end. Therefore, man should never be tempted to break Allāh's commands (and his pledges) because of his desire for worldly gains. He should always bear in mind that the eternal success of the Hereafter cannot be bartered for the temporary things of this world because *"What is with you* (the wealth of this world) *shall come to an end and what is with Allāh* (the rewards of the Hereafter) *will last forever."*

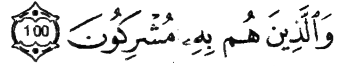
Allāh continues, *"We shall most definitely reward those who are patient for the good deeds that they do."* The phrase *"those who are patient"* denotes those people who are steadfast upon Allāh's commandments and never sway from the path of truth.

"As for that male or female who does good and is a believer, We will certainly grant them a good life and most surely reward them for the good that they do." Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has quoted several interpretations of *"a good life."* According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, it refers to a life of contentment. Another interpretation says that it refers to the inspiration and guidance that Allāh bestows upon a person so that he is able to perform those actions that please Allāh.

Other commentators mention that it denotes entry into Heaven *(Jannah)*, while others say that it means Allāh's forgiveness and proximity unto Him. Yet another interpretation is that this refers to such a life in which a person remains independent from creation and always turns only to the Creator. The final interpretation is that a person is blessed with the supreme quality of being happy with Allāh's decree at all times.

There is no discrepancy between all these interpretations, since they can all be applied simultaneously. The life of a Believer *(Mu'min)*, as opposed to that of disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the sinners, is filled with contentment and peace. Whenever he is confronted with any difficulty, he is never perplexed since he is happy with whatever Allāh decrees for him. In fact, he acquires satisfaction and joy from these difficulties.

Together with this blissful life, he will be eternally happy in Heaven *(Jannah)*. The only condition for these bounties is that *"they are believers."* Gender is never a barrier against Allāh's bounty and grace.

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ فَٱسْتَعِذْ بِٱللَّهِ مِنَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ ٱلرَّجِيمِ (98) إِنَّهُۥ لَيْسَ لَهُۥ سُلْطَٰنٌ عَلَى
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ (99) إِنَّمَا سُلْطَٰنُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُۥ

(98) When you recite the Qur'ān, then seek refuge with Allāh from Devil (Shaytān), the accursed. (99) Indeed he has no sway over those who believe and who rely solely on their Lord. (100) His sway is only on those who befriend him and those who ascribe partners to Allāh.

SEEK ALLĀH'S REFUGE FROM DEVIL *(SHAYTĀN)* WHEN COMMENCING RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

Devil *(Shaytān)* is the sworn enemy of man and constantly tries to dissuade man from engaging in Allāh's worship. Even when man does worship Allāh, Devil *(Shaytān)* plagues his mind with evil thoughts. When a believer *(Mu'min)* recites the Qur'ān, he is affected by it and gains satisfaction because it is like communicating with Allāh. Devil *(Shaytān)* cannot tolerate this and makes every effort to distract man's attention. It is for this reason that Allāh says, *"When you recite the Qur'ān, then seek refuge with Allāh from Devil (Shaytān), the accursed."*

Therefore, when a person begins to recite the Qur'ān, he should say, ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm."*** Thereafter, it will be Masnūn for him to add ***"Bismillāh Hir Rahmān Nir Rahīm."***

When a person wishes to occupy a home, he will first rid the home of all harmful things. Thereafter, he will begin to decorate the home. In a similar manner, when a person intends to recite the Qur'ān, he should first rid the heart of Devil's *(Shaytān's)* evil whispers by reciting, ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm."*** Thereafter he will decorate his heart with the mention of Allāh's name and attributes by saying, ***"Bismillāh Hir Rahmān Nir Rahīm."***

When commencing recitation of the Qur'ān it is sufficient to recite ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"*** once only. However, if one has to interrupt the recitation by eating, drinking, speaking or any other act that is not related to recitation of the Qur'ān, then one should repeat ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm."***

Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه and Belief *(Imān)* Ahmad bin Hambal رحمة الله عليه have all preferred the use of the words *"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* instead of any other configuration of words.

Besides the occasion when beginning recitation of the Qur'ān, the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth have stipulated other occasions as well when ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"*** should be recited. Allāh says in verse 200 of Surah A'rāf (Surah 7), *"Should a temptation come to you from Satan (Shaytān) then seek refuge with Allāh. Verily He is the All Hearing, the All Knowing."*

Allāh also says in Surah Mu'min, *"And say, 'O my Lord! I seek refuge with You from the evil whispering of the Satan (Shaytān). And I seek refuge with You, O my Lord, that they approach me."* [*Surah 23, verse 97, 98*]

According to the Ahadīth, one should recite ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"*** upon becoming angry and when hearing the braying of a donkey. [*Mishkāt p. 213*]

In another hadith the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated that a person should recite *"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"* when hearing a dog bark or a donkey bray because they see things that man does not i.e. the Devil *(Shaytān).* [*Mishkāt p. 373*]

Before entering the toilet a person should firstly recite ***"Bismillāh"*** and then seek refuge from Shaytān with the words, ***"Allāhumma Inni A'ūdhu Bika Minal Khubuthi Wal Khabā'ith."*** (TRANSLATION: "O Allāh! I seek refuge with You from the male and female Devil *(Shaytān).*")

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* HAS NO SWAY OVER THOSE BELIEVERS WHO RELY TOTALLY ON ALLĀH

"Indeed he Satan (Shaytān) has no sway over those who believe and who rely solely on their Lord." Satan *(Shaytān)* cannot deter these people from the path of truth despite his concerted efforts. However, they may succumb to sin because of the demands of their carnal selves.

"His sway is only on those who befriend him and those who ascribe partners to Allāh." Those who befriend Satan *(Shaytān)* are most prominently the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the polytheists. Those believers *(Mu'minīn)* who submit to the dictates of Shaytān will also be classified as his friends since they obey him.

Whenever a person is struck by an evil thought from Satan *(Shaytān),* he should immediately dispel the thought by reciting ***"A'ūdhu Billāhi Minash Shaytān Nir Rajīm"*** He should then engage in Allāh's remembrance *(dhikr)* or some other act of virtue. If he allows the thought to tarry in his mind, it will persist. Shaytān will also cause doubts in a person's ablution *(wudhu),* his faith *(Imān)* and his Salāh.

Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Satan *(Shaytān)* will come to you and ask, 'Who created this and who created that?' Eventually he will ask you who created your Lord? When this happens, seek refuge with Allāh and leave the matter to rest." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.463*]

A person once told Sayyidina Qāsim bin Muhammad رحمة الله عليه that he experienced many distractions and stray thoughts in his Salāh. Sayyidina Qāsim رحمة الله عليه told him to continue performing his Salāh and the problem will be eradicated only when he informs Satan *(Shaytān)* after the Salāh that his Salāh was not performed. [*Mishkāt p. 19*]

This means that he should not be concerned with the distractions of Satan *(Shaytān).* If he has to err in Salāh, he should perform the prostration of mistake *(Sajdah Sahw)* as prescribed and not be perplexed about Devil's *(Shaytān's)* reminders that something has been omitted. After Salāh he should address Devil *(Shaytān),* asking him what he wants with the Salāh. He should be told to go away and that he should not pretend to be concerned about the perfection of one's Salāh since no Salāh had been performed. Once this is done, Devil *(Shaytān)* will discontinue his efforts.

A saint narrated that Devil *(Shaytān)* would constantly whisper to him after ablution *(wudhu)* that he did not make the masah of the head. Devil *(Shaytān)*

told him that if he did not make the masah, the Salāh would be incorrect and that performing Salāh without ablution *(wudhu)* was tantamount to disbelief *(kufr)*. He says that for a while he used to repeat the masah to dispel the doubt, but afterwards he told Devil *(Shaytān)*, "You are hardly a Muslim yourself that you should worry about my belief *(Imān)*." Thereafter Devil *(Shaytān)* stopped pestering him.

Allowing devil *(Shaytān)* to continue his efforts will lead one to destruction. Devil *(Shaytān)* intends to lead man only to the doom he is headed for.

وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَآ ءَايَةً مَّكَانَ ءَايَةٍ وَٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ
مُفْتَرٍۭ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (101) قُلْ نَزَّلَهُۥ رُوحُ ٱلْقُدُسِ مِن رَّبِّكَ بِٱلْحَقِّ
لِيُثَبِّتَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ (102) وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ
يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُۥ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ ٱلَّذِى يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِىٌّ وَهَٰذَا
لِسَانٌ عَرَبِىٌّ مُّبِينٌ (103) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (104) إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِى ٱلْكَذِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ
وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْكَٰذِبُونَ (105)

(101) When We replace a verse with another, and Allāh knows best what He reveals, they say, "You are but a perjurer!" But most of them have no knowledge. (102) Say, "The Ruhul Qudus has revealed it with truth from your Lord to make the believers steadfast, and as a guidance and a glad tiding for the Muslims." (103) Indeed We know well that they say, "A human teaches him." The language of the person to whom they refer is Ajami (non-Arabic), while this is in the clear Arabic language. (104) Verily Allāh will not guide those who do not believe in His verses, and for them shall be a tormenting punishment. (105) Those who do not believe in Allāh's verses merely invent lies. These are the true liars!

THE REPLY TO THOSE WHO OBJECT TO THE ABROGATION OF QUR'ĀNIC VERSES

Allāh says, *"When We replace a verse with another, and Allāh knows best what He reveals, they* [the disbelievers *(kuffār)*] *say, 'You are but a perjurer!"* The disbelievers *(kuffār)* say that the Book of Allāh cannot be changed like how the Qur'ān is. They maintain that it must therefore be the product of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The reply to this objection has already been discussed in Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *"Whenever We repeal any verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring something better or equivalent to it. Do you not know that Allāh has power over all things?"* [*Surah 2, verse 106*]

Allāh says in the above verse, *"But most of them have no knowledge." i.e.* Their

objection is based on ignorance. They fail to understand that the change in any law is for the welfare of man and based on Allāh's infinite wisdom. Allāh says in between the verse that He *"knows best what He reveals."*

In reply to the allegation that the Qur'ān is a product of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Say, 'The Ruhul Qudus [Jibr'īl عليه السلام] has revealed it with truth from your Lord to make the believers steadfast, and as a guidance and a glad tiding for the Muslims."*

THE REPLY TO THE ALLEGATION THAT THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم WAS TAUGHT BY ANOTHER PERSON

"Indeed We know well that they say, 'A human teaches him.'" The polytheists used to say that the Qur'ān was *"tales of the old men."* Some of them also said that another man taught the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Some commentators say that they referred to a person by the name of Ya'īsh, who was previously a Christian. He was not an Arab, and accepted Islām later. When he used to come to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to learn about Islām, the polytheists made the preposterous claim that he was teaching the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that there were two non-Arabs living in Makkah who had knowledge of the Torah and the Injīl. They used to make swords When the Quraish persecuted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he used to sit with the two of them and be consoled by their talks. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was learning from them.

Allāh refutes their allegation by saying, *"The language of the person to whom they refer is Ajami* (non-Arabic), *while this is in the clear Arabic language."* It is obvious that a person who can hardly speak Arabic cannot produce anything even remotely similar to the Qur'ān, especially when highly eloquent linguists of Arabic could not match the Qur'ān. Even to this day none has met the challenge of the Qur'ān to produce a single Surah like any of the Qur'ān.

"Verily Allāh will not guide those who do not believe in His verses, and for them shall be a tormenting punishment." This verse refers to those who recognise the verses of Allāh to be the truth yet are too stubborn to accept them. They shall be punished in this world by being deprived of the wealth of Belief *(Imān)* and, in the Hereafter, their destination shall be Hell.

"Those who do not believe on Allāh's verses merely invent lies. These are the true liars!" This verse refers to those who claimed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has fabricated the Qur'ān and was lying by saying that it was from Allāh. Indeed their lie is the greatest since it is obvious that an unlettered person could never produce the like of the Qur'ān.

مَن كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ إِيمَٰنِهِۦٓ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُۥ مُطْمَئِنٌّۢ بِالْإِيمَٰنِ
وَلَٰكِن مَّن شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

(106) Those who disbelieve in Allāh after believing - save for him who is forced, but his heart is content with Belief (Imān) and who open their hearts to disbelief will have Allāh's wrath upon them and theirs shall be a terrible punishment. (107) This is because they prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter, and Allāh certainly does not guide the disbelieving folk. (108) These are the ones upon whose hearts, ears and eyes Allāh has set a seal. These are the negligent ones. (109) Without doubt, they will be the losers in the Hereafter.

THE PUNISHMENT FOR DISBELIEVING AFTER BEING A BELIEVER

The polytheists of Makkah spared no effort to harm and beat those who accepted Islām, especially those Muslims who were slaves or foreign to Makkah. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه reports that the first seven people to express their belief in Islām were the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Ammār رضی الله عنه, his mother Sayyidina Sumayya رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Suhayb رضی الله عنه, Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه and Sayyidina Miqdād رضی الله عنه.

He says that Allāh protected the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم by means of his uncle Abu Tālib, and Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه was protected by Allāh by means of his tribe. The rest of them were tortured by the polytheists and made to wear steel armour while lying in the sweltering heat of the sun. They were told to utter words of infidelity *(kufr)* or die in this manner.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه mentions further that all of them besides Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه uttered such words to save themselves. Sayyidina Bilāl رضی الله عنه was prepared to sacrifice his life for Allāh and was constantly tortured until Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه bought his freedom. Sayyidah Sumayya رضی الله عنها was privileged enough to be the first person to be martyred in the history of Islām. [*Al Bidaya wan Nihayah v. 3 p.55 .59*]

The above verse was revealed with regard to the other Sahabah رضی الله عنهم who were forced by the polytheists to utter words of infidelity *(kufr)*. Although they said these words, they still remained staunch believers.

Durrul Manthūr *(v. 3 p. 132)* reports that the polytheists once apprehended Sayyidina Ammār bin Yāsir رضی الله عنه and only left him when he spoke ill of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and praised their idols. He later came to the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم, who asked him how things were. He replied that maters were exceptionally unfavourable. Thereafter he told the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that he had lied when he spoke ill of the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم and

praised the idols.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what was the condition of his heart. He replied that it was content with Belief *(Imān)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he could repeat those words if ever the disbelievers *(kuffār)* were to harass him in that manner. On this occasion Allāh revealed the verse *'save for him who is forced, but his heart is content with Belief (Imān)."*

"Durrul Manthūr" also reports that Abdullāh bin Ibn Abi Sarh turned apostate after being a Muslim. Allāh says about him, *"and (those) who open their hearts to disbelief will have Allāh's wrath upon them and theirs shall be a terrible punishment."*

The above verse states that Allāh's wrath and a terrible punishment will afflict those who willingly turn away from Islām to return to disbelief *(kufr)*. The only exception is those who are forced to verbally detract from Islām for fear of their lives. Of course, they will be rewarded greatly if they chose to endure the torture like Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه or to sacrifice their lives like Sayyidah Sumayya رضى الله عنها.

"Durrul Manthūr" reports that two Muslims were captured and brought before Musailama Kadhdhāb. When he asked the one whether he attested to the Prophethood of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, he replied in the affirmative. When he asked him whether he (Musailama) was Allāh's Prophet, the Sahabi رضى الله عنه placed his fingers in his ears, denoting that he was deaf to the statement. Musailama then had him killed.

Then turning his attention to the second Sah'abi رضى الله عنه, Musailama posed the same questions to him. He replied that he also believed Musailama to be Allāh's Prophet. Consequently, he was released. When he returned to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he related the incident to him. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Your companion has passed away with Belief *(Imān)* and you have practised the concession." It is learnt from this that mere verbal threats will not be regarded as *'force"*

It was previously mentioned that Abdullāh bin Ibn Abi Sarh turned apostate after being a Muslim. He was the foster brother of Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه, who brought him before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when Makkah was conquered. On that occasion he accepted Islām again. However, the verse revealed with regard to him will still apply until eternity i.e. *"and (those) who open their hearts to disbelief will have Allāh's wrath upon them and theirs shall be a terrible punishment."*

Ruling: If a person is threatened with death or that a limb of his body will be severed if he does not eat carrion, swine or drink wine, then it will be obligatory *(fardh)* for him to oblige. This will be the case when he is certain that the threat is genuine and that the threatening person is capable of carrying out the threat. If he refused to eat the unlawful *(Harām)* food and was killed, he (the person killed) 'will be guilty of a sin.

Ruling: It is not permissible to kill another Muslim even if one is threatened with death.

"This is because they prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter..." The love for worldly pleasures deters people from accepting Islām and from adhering to it even though they know that it is the truth. These people fear the loss of some worldly possession if they remain as Muslims. They should rather place the Hereafter before them and aspire for it instead. Even today there are many Muslims who adhere staunchly to Islām despite being persecuted by their families and the police.

Those Muslims who turn disbeliever *(kāfir)* by rejecting the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also do so because of their love for women, honour and wealth offered to them by their Christian teachers.

"...and Allāh certainly does not guide the disbelieving folk." They cannot expect to be guided by Allāh when they refute the truth after recognizing it.

"These are the ones upon whose hearts, ears and eyes Allāh has set a seal. These are the negligent ones." Their incessant refusal has caused their senses to be rendered futile and they will be deprived of the bliss of both worlds.

"Without doubt, they will be the losers in the Hereafter." Not only will they be deprived of Heaven *(Jannah)*, but they will have to suffer the eternal torment of Hell as well.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا
إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿110﴾ ۞ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ عَنْ
نَفْسِهَا وَتُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿111﴾

(110) Then your Lord shall be Most Forgiving and Most Merciful after all unto those who migrate after being tried and then strive in His way and exercise patience. (111) The day when every person shall fight for his soul and every soul shall be rewarded in full for its deeds and they will not be oppressed.

THE REWARD FOR THOSE WHO MIGRATE AND ARE STEADFAST

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p.87*) reports that the first of the above verses was revealed with regard to Sayyidina Ayāsh bin Abi Rabī'ah رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Jundub رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Walīd bin Walīd رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Salamah bin Hishām رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abi Usayd رضى الله عنه. They were all forced by the polytheists to utter certain things. However, they all migrated, participated in Jihād and remained loyal to Islām. Allāh revealed this verse with glad tidings of His forgiveness and mercy for them.

Sayyidina Hasan and Ikrama رحمة الله عليه state that the verse was revealed with regard to Abdullāh bin Abi Sarh who accepted Islām again after turning apostate when Makkah was conquered.

Whatever the case may be, Allāh's statement is clear that *"Then your Lord shall be Most Forgiving and Most Merciful after all unto those who migrate after being*

tried and then strive in His way and exercise patience." All their ill deeds committed as disbelievers *(kuffār)* will be forgiven because acceptance of Islām obliterates all sins.

In the second verse Allāh says, *"The day when every person shall fight for* (the emancipation of) *his soul and every soul shall be rewarded in full for its deeds and they will not be oppressed." People will see the rewards of all their good deeds."*

وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ ءَامِنَةً مُّطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِّن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ ٱللَّهِ فَأَذَٰقَهَا ٱللَّهُ لِبَاسَ ٱلْجُوعِ وَٱلْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿112﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ ٱلْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿113﴾

(112) Allāh cites the similitude of a town that was peaceful and tranquil. Their provision came to them in abundance from every avenue, but they were ungrateful for Allāh's bounty and, because of their actions, Allāh caused them to taste the attire of hunger and fear. (113) Indeed messengers came to them from their midst, but they denied them, because of which a punishment afflicted them while they were oppressive.

THE STORY OF AN UNGRATEFUL TOWN THAT LOST ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES

According to many commentators, the above verses do not refer to any particular town. Allāh cites a general example of cities that are *"peaceful and tranquil. Their provision came to them in abundance from every avenue, but they were ungrateful for Allāh's bounty and, because of their actions, Allāh caused them to taste the attire of hunger and fear."* These people never appreciated Allāh's bounties. In addition to this, *"Indeed messengers came to them from their midst, but they denied them, because of which a punishment afflicted them while they were oppressive."* Allāh cited the example as a warning to the people of Makkah.

Other commentators maintain that the similitude referred to Makkah itself. Allāh sent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to them, who was from the Quraysh themselves. Allāh had made Makkah such a town that all in it were safeguarded, even though people were being killed in the nearby vicinity. Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, "Do *they not see that We have made the Haram peaceful, whereas people are being ravaged around them? Do they believe in falsehood and show ingratitude for Allāh's bounties?"* [*Surah 29, verse 67*]

The people of Makkah also received an abundance of provision from near and abroad. Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"Have We not granted them a peaceful Haram, to which the fruit of everything is attracted as a provision from us? However, most of them have no knowledge."* [*Surah 28, verse 57*]

The people of Makkah denied the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and persecuted him until he was forced to leave his beloved hometown

where his forefathers Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليه السلام settled. Even after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated, the polytheists continued to harass him. Eventually the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed to Allāh against them and he instructed all the tribes that accepted Islām not to supply Makkah with food.

As a result of this, the Makkans became so starved that they were forced to eat burnt bones and carrion. They were so emaciated that they saw only smoke when they looked at the sky. They suffered in this condition for seven years. In addition to this they also suffered great fear for the Muslims.

Eventually they sent a message to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم telling him that he was one who always maintained good family relations and that he should not allow the women and children to suffer with his enemies. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then permitted grains to be sent to Makkah and himself sent supplies to them.

The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" and Allāma Qurtubi have stated that the town referred to in the above verse is Makkah. Allāh cited their example as a lesson to mankind at large.

It is learnt from this verse that ingratitude causes bounties to be lost. This was also mentioned in the commentary of the verse where Allāh announces, *"If you show gratitude, then I will definitely give you more, and if you are ungrateful, then indeed My punishment is severe."* [*Surah Ibrahīm (14), verse 7*]

Note: In the above verse Allāh speaks of the *"attire"* of fear and hunger. Commentators mention that the reason for this is that these people were previously inundated with bounties, as if they were clothed in them. However, after their ingratitude, they were now so much afflicted with starvation and fear that it seemed as if they were clothed with this misfortune. It was as if they changed their clothing. However, since this change of attire was not voluntary, Allāh says that He *"caused them to taste the attire of hunger and fear."*

Allāh describes the affliction as a *"taste"* because He assimilates the change of situations as bitter food that is given to someone to taste. Just the taste thereof is sufficient to alter the person's disposition. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 14 p.243*]

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿114﴾ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿115﴾

(114) So eat from the pure and lawful things that Allāh has provided for you, and be grateful for Allāh's bounty if you worship Him only. (115) Allāh has forbidden for you only carrion, blood, the flesh of swine and what has been slaughtered for any other besides Allāh. As for him who is driven by necessity, then (he may eat of it) neither rebelliously, nor transgressing the limits, for verily Allāh is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

EAT FROM THE SUSTENANCE PROVIDED BY ALLĀH, BE GRATEFUL AND ABSTAIN FROM THE FORBIDDEN

Allāh instructs, *"So eat from the pure and lawful things that Allāh has provided for you, and be grateful for Allāh's bounty if you worship Him only."* Allāh has mentioned worship here because expressing gratitude to Allāh is also a form of worship. Perfect worship is impossible without showing gratitude to Allāh.

"Allāh has forbidden for you only carrion, blood, the flesh of swine and what has been slaughtered for any other besides Allāh. As for him who is driven by necessity, then (he may eat of it) *neither rebelliously* (i.e. without deriving pleasure from it), *nor transgressing the limits* (by eating more than what will merely sustain life), *for verily Allāh is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."* In this case he will not be sinful.

The same words have appeared with a slight modification in verse 173 of Surah Baqarah *(Surah 2)*. Verse 3 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah 5)* also contains mention of the forbidden foods. One should refer to the details mentioned in these two verses. The word *"only"* (as mentioned before) does not mean that these are the only unlawful *(Harām)* foods. Many others have been mentioned in other verses of the Qur'ān and in the Ahadīth.

وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ ٱلْكَذِبَ هَٰذَا حَلَٰلٌ وَهَٰذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ
ٱلْكَذِبَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ٱلْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ (116) مَتَٰعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ
أَلِيمٌ (117) وَعَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ حَرَّمْنَا مَا قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَمَا ظَلَمْنَٰهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (118)

(116) With regard to the false claims made by your tongues, do not say, "This is lawful (Halāl)" and "This is unlawful (Harām)," so as to invent lies against Allāh. Indeed those who invent lies against Allāh will never be successful. (117) A paltry asset. And theirs shall be a torturous punishment. (118) We have forbidden for the Jews the things that We have related to you before. We did not oppress them, but they oppressed themselves.

ONLY ALLĀH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE THINGS *LAWFUL* (HALĀL) AND UNLAWFUL *(HARĀM)*

It was common among the polytheists Arabs to declare certain things *unlawful* (Harām) and other things *Lawful* (Halāl) as and when they pleased. Mention has already been made of these details in verse 103 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah* 5) and verses 138 and 139 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*)

In the above verse Allāh warns that people cannot merely declare things to be *Lawful* (Halāl) or *unlawful* (Harām) as they please. Doing so will constitute lying against Allāh because only He reserves the right to declare anything *Lawful* (Halāl) or *`unlawful* (Harām). Allāh says, *'indeed those who invent lies against Allāh will never be successful."*

The benefits that they receive in this world from making such claims and by disobeying Allāh are indeed *"A paltry asset."* After the expiry of these short-lived assets *"theirs shall be a torturous punishment"* in the Hereafter.

"We have forbidden for the Jews the things that We have related to you before." The details of these have passed in verse 146 of Surah Ān'ām (Surah 6), where Allāh says, *"We forbade every clawed animal upon the Jews. From among cattle and goats, We forbade for them the fat of the two, excluding what is carried by the back, the entrails and what is attached to the bones. This was the punishment We gave them as retribution for their rebellion, and undoubtedly We are truthful."*

Details of this can also be found in the commentary of verse 160 of Surah Nisā (Surah 4), where Allāh says, *"Because of the oppression of the Jews, We forbade them from the pure things that were permissible for them; and because of their excessive prevention from the path of Allāh..."*

Since this was a punishment for the deeds that they perpetrated, Allāh says, *"We did not oppress them, but they oppressed themselves."*

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿119﴾

(119) Then verily your Lord is certainly Most Forgiving and Most Merciful to those who ignorantly committed evil and then repent afterwards and make amends.

ALLĀH ACCEPTS REPENTANCE AND FORGIVES

While the previous verses contained warnings against engaging in various evils, the above verse promises forgiveness for those who will repent for their sins. Allāh will forgive those who sinned out of foolishness, as well as those disbelievers *(kuffār)* who repent and accept Islām.

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿120﴾ شَاكِرًا لِأَنْعُمِهِ
اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿121﴾ وَآتَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿122﴾ ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنِ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ
الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿123﴾ إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ
لَيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿124﴾

(120) Ibrahīm was certainly a great leader, obedient, aloof from all religion's (D'īn's) and attuned to only one. He was not from the idolaters. (121) He was grateful for Allāh's favours. Allāh chose him and guided him on the straight path. (122) We granted him good in this world and he shall be from the

righteous in the Hereafter. (123) Then We sent revelation to you that "Follow the religion (D'īn) of Ibrahīm that is averse to all other religion's (D'īn's). He was not from the idolaters." (124) Reverence of the Sabbath was ordained only for those who differed about it. Undoubtedly your Lord will decide between them on the Day of Judgement concerning the matters about which they differed.

THE NOBLE QUALITIES OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام AND THE COMMAND TO FOLLOW HIS RELIGION *(D'ĪN)*

The Qur'ān mentions Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in numerous verses. In propagating oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, He endured many hardships for the sake of Allāh. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"When his Lord tried Ibrahīm with certain words, which he fulfilled. Allāh said, "I am to make you a leader for the people."* [*Surah 2, verse 124*]

Allāh granted him Prophethood, a few scriptures and made him the father of all the Prophets عليهم السلام who came after him, and they all adhered to the broad principles of his religion *(D'īn)*. Even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was from his progeny and he is commanded, *"Then We sent revelation to you that 'Follow the religion (D'īn) of Ibrahīm that is averse to all other religion's (D'īn's). He was not from the idolaters."*

It for this reason that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is regarded as the leader and Imām of the Prophets عليهم السلام after him. His creed was that of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and submission to Allāh, and every Prophet has propagated this belief.

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah that the person who does not follow his creed is most foolish. Allāh says, in verses 130 and 131 of Surah Baqarah, *"Only the one who makes a fool of himself will turn away from the creed of Ibrahīm. We undoubtedly selected him in this world and he will be amongst the righteous in the Hereafter. When his Lord told him, 'Submit'. He replied, "I submit to the Lord of the universe."*

Presently, the religious practices of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام are only found in the religion *(D'īn)* of Islām and the only caller to it is Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. All vices, be it polytheism *(shirk)*, immorality, corruption, etc are all to be found among those who turn away from this creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Although sinful Muslims are to be found, they sin with the knowledge that they are sinning, and will repent sooner or later.

The Hajj, Umrah, Saī, sacrifices of animals and circumcision are practices from the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that were propagated by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

The verse under discussion also describes Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام as *"obedient "* The Arabic equivalent of this word used in the verse may also denote the meaning of a devout worshipper that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Ibrahīm عليه السلام was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one abiding to the truth and subservient, never from the idolaters. Verily those closest to Ibrahīm عليه السلام are the ones who followed him and this Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, as well as those who believe. Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers."* [*Surah 3, verses 67, 68*]

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is described in numerous verses as being "hanāf." Imām Rāghib رحمة الله عليه explains this word to mean that he was averse to deviation and inclined towards the truth.

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 1 p.140*) reports from the "Musnad" of Ahmad and "Adabul Mufrid" that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked which religion *(D'īn)* was most beloved to Allāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that it was that religion *(D'īn)* which is averse to falsehood, imbued with the truth and that is not difficult to practise (i.e. Islām).

The Jews and the Christians claim their affiliation to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. This cannot be so because they perpetrate polytheism *(shirk)*, whereas Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was never a polytheist. This fact is attested in Surah Baqarah, Surah Āl Imrān as well as the above verse (123) of Surah Nahl. The verses of Surah Āl Imrān clearly refute the affiliation that the polytheists claimed with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

Further describing Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"He was grateful for Allāh's favours."* This verse serves to remind the people of Makkah that they should also act in a similar way since he was their forefather who was the founder of their city and prayed for their provisions.

"Allāh chose him and guided him on the straight path." Every bounty, even guidance and leadership is from Allāh only. Allāh grants these to whomsoever He wills. Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Allāh selects messengers from the angels and from mankind.* [*Surah 22, verse 75*]

Allāh says about Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, *"Thereafter his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance and made him steadfast on guidance."* In Surah Yusuf , Sayyidina Ya'qub عليه السلام told his son Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, *"In this manner has your Lord chosen you, taught you the interpretation of dreams."*

Allāh told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"Allāh said, "O Mūsa, indeed I have chosen you from the people for My message and My speech. So take what I have given you and be of the grateful ones."* Addressing the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says, *"Strive for Allāh with the endeavour that is His right. He has chosen you and has not placed any hardship upon in religion (D'īn)."* Everything is from Allāh and He is not compelled to grant anything to anyone. All that man receives is from His infinite grace and munificence.

"We granted him good in this world..." According to certain commentators, this refers to good conditions and good traits. Some maintain that it refers to all bounties, while others say that the reference is to good and pious offspring. Yet another group states that the verse refers to Prophethood, while others say that it refers to the acceptance of a supplication *(du'ā)* that he made to Allāh saying, *"And maintain a favourable word for me amongst those who are to come."* Every religion *(D'īn)* speaks highly of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and, until judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will pray for him in every Salāh when they recite the Durūd Ibrahīm.

"....and he shall be from the righteous in the Hereafter." These words have been also mentioned in verse 130 of Surah Baqarah. His inclusion in the ranks of the pious and steadfast bondsmen of Allāh denotes his high ranking in Allāh's

estimation.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that everyone will be raised naked from their graves and Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will be the first to be clothed. [*Mishkāt p. 483*]

According to another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will be the first to be clothed on the Day of Judgement. Allāh will say, 'Clothe my friend.' Then two white garments will be brought from Heaven *(Jannah)*, with which he will be dressed. Thereafter I will be clothed." [*Mishkāt p. 493*]

VENERATION OF THE SABBATH WAS DECREED FOR THE JEWS

"Reverence of the Sabbath was ordained only for those who differed about it." The Jews were commanded not to fish on Saturdays, but they contravened the command and were punished, as mentioned in verses 65 and 66 of Surah Baqarah and in verses 163 to 166 of Surah A'rāf.

The Jews claimed that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was a Jew and that everything that was Harām in their religion *(D'īn)* was also Harām in the religion *(D'īn)* of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Allāh refutes this claim of theirs by saying that the Sabbath was ordained for them but not for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, just as their religion *(D'īn)* differed from that of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in so many other ways.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه that the Jews are referred to as those who differed with regard to the Sabbath because some of them abided by Allāh's command while others did not. This interpretation agrees with the details furnished in Surah A'rāf.

Fridays have been ordained for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned with regard to Friday, *"This day is greater in the sight of Allāh than the days of Eidul Adhā and Eidul Fitr."* [*Mishkāt p. 120*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that there is a moment during every Friday in which any supplication *(du'ā)* will be accepted. [*Mishkāt p. 119*]

The Friday *(Jum'uah)* Salāh had been ordained for this day and people have been instructed to gather in masses for this Salāh. Sayyidina Abu Huraira رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "We are the last (Ummah) to appear (on earth) but will be the first on the Day of Judgement [i.e. the first to be admitted into Heaven *(Jannah)*]. The only difference between the previous Ummahs and us is that they have been given divine scriptures before us. There is this day in which they differed, but Allāh guided us to it (by stipulating Fridays for us). Now other people are our followers. The Jews have adopted tomorrow (Saturday) and the Christians, the day after (Sunday)." [*Bukhari v. 1 p.120*]

The commentators of hadith have mentioned that Allāh instructed the previous Ummahs to stipulate a day in which they would devote themselves to Allāh's worship. The Jews chose Saturdays and the Christians chose Sundays.

"Undoubtedly your Lord will decide between them on the Day of Judgement

concerning the matters about which they differed." Those Jews who obeyed the injunction to refrain from fishing shall be judged apart from those who perpetrated the crime on the Day of Judgement.

ٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلْحِكْمَةِ وَٱلْمَوْعِظَةِ ٱلْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَٰدِلْهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِٱلْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿125﴾

(125) Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful exhortation (Mow'idhatul Hasanah) and debate with them in a manner that is best. Indeed your Lord knows best who strays from His path and He knows best who the rightly guided ones are.

THE ETIQUETTE OF PROPAGATION

"Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful exhortation (Mow'idhatul Hasanah) and debate with them in a manner that is best." This verse contains three guidelines for propagation. Although the verse is addressed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is intended for his entire Ummah. If the three factors are employed, then a straight thinking person will surely accept the message, be it towards belief *(Imān)* or towards good deeds.

The first factor is *"wisdom."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has defined this as accurate speech which appeals to the soul. This speech will vary according to the nature of the audience, and the speaker should consider very carefully the matter before presenting his address. He should use various modes of communication and adopt a forgiving attitude towards what the opposite party says.

The person should comment on the rewards together with the warnings, and always speak when the occasion permits. The address should also not be too lengthy to bore the audience. If he is unsuccessful in convincing the audience the first time, he should bide his time to seize another appropriate opportunity. The second time round, he should be more accommodating and gentle. Allāh instructed Sayyidina Mūsa and Hārūn عليهما السلام when He sent them to Fir'aun, *"Speak to him in kind and gentle words so that he may take heed or fear (Me)."*

However, the speaker may also be severe when the occasion demands it, like when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Jabal رضى الله عنه sternly when he prolonged the Isha Salāh. Of course, this should be adopted only when addressing the "converted". The speaker should take care not to adopt harsh words merely to appease his personal feelings, but this should be done with the welfare of the audience in mind. Therefore, he must be a well-wisher of the people. Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام told his people, *"I am surely a trustworthy advisor to you."*

A wise preacher should also present the religion *(D'īn)* as a simple procedure for people so that they are not distanced from it. Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Adopt an easy approach and do not be difficult. Convey glad tidings and do not cause resentment."

[*Bukhari v. 1 p.12*]

Many people have the desire to express the truth but do not choose the appropriate moment and correct mode of address. They feel that they have done a good deed, but really do not benefit the addressee. Instead they cause harm by making the person more stubborn and adamant.

Of course, the truth must be voiced when it is being suppressed. On such an occasion, it will not be necessary to be gentle. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has mentioned that the best Jihād is to voice the truth before a tyrant. [*Sharhus Sunnah*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی الله عنه used to address people every thursday. When the people expressed the wish to be addressed everyday, he said, "I do not address you everyday because of the fear of boring you. I wish to address you when you show interest, just as the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would address us according to the occasion so that we would not grow weary." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 12*]

One of the demands of wisdom is also that people should not be told such things that they cannot understand or that they may find strange, even though it may be a true fact. People should be taught gradually until they are able to comprehend certain facts. Sayyidina Ali رضی الله عنه mentioned, "Inform people what they can comprehend. Do you want Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم to be falsified?" This means that people should not be told such things of Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that they consider farfetched.

It is for this reason that Ulama maintain that a recitor *(Qāri)* should not recite the Qur'ān in a Qirā'ah that is unfamiliar to the people of a locality. This may cause them to think, that the recitation is incorrect, causing the falsification of an authentic Qirā'ah.

Another requirement of wisdom is that a stern attitude be adopted in public addresses, while a gentle attitude be adopted when addressing someone privately. Names of people should also not be mentioned when referring to sins. The speaker should rather say that some people are committing a certain sin. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم also used to say, "What ails certain people that they do this..."

No degree of explanation can do justice to the word "wisdom." In brief, one should understand that wise speech would entail speaking in such a manner that people will accept what is being said without feeling uneasy. The audience should not be prompted to remain adamant by the speaker's words, neither should it cause resentment. When the object is to propagate the truth and the intention is sincere, Allāh will cause a person to speak in such a manner that he could not have learnt from anyone, nor read in any book.

It should also be borne in mind that it is not permissible to perpetrate unlawful *(Harām)* act with the intention of reforming anyone. Some people are under the misconception that they can perpetrate acts of innovation *(bid'ah)* or consume unlawful *(Harām)* wealth to win over another person with the intention of reforming him. This is incorrect and contradictory to the Shari'ah.

The second factor mentioned in the verse is calling to Allāh's path with beautiful exhortation *(Mow'idhatul Hasanah).* This includes encouragement and warnings, together with such incidents that soften the heart. The address should be such that it inculcates the concern for the Hereafter within the heart and prompts the audience to do good deeds and to abstain from sin. If the address causes humiliation and resentment in the hearts of the audience, then it would be considered bereft of beautiful exhortation *(Mow'idhatul Hasanah).*

The third prerequisite for sound da'wah (*preaching*) is that the preacher *"debate with them in a manner that is best."* This does not refer to arguments and squabbles, but to constructive and amicable debate. There will always be those who will remain stubborn and will raise all types of absurd objections and arguments. They should be tackled with tolerance and answered in a manner that stems their opposition. When their harshness is answered with gentleness, their opposition will be dissolved and they will eventually accept the truth.

This was the method of the Prophets عليهم السلام. Although they were called by all types of insulting names, they still exercised patience and spoke to people kindly, as is clear from the verses of Surah A'rāf Surah Hūd and Surah Shu'arā.

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"Whose speech can be better than the one who calls towards Allāh, performs righteous deeds, and says. 'I am from the Muslims.' Good and evil cannot be equal. Resist with that which is best, and the one between yourself and whom there was enmity, will instantly become like your bosom friend. Only the patient ones will be inspired with this. Only the most fortunate will be inspired with this."* [*Surah 41, verses 33-35*]

Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, 'Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace. We do not wish to converse with the ignorant.'"* [*Surah 28, verse 55*]

The preacher should be calm and composed when addressing those who become agitated and impossible to deal with. If the preacher adopts that same mannerism, there will be, no difference between him and the disputants.

Verse 258 of Surah Baqarah recounts the incident of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام when he contested a point with the ignorant king Nimrūd. Upon prompting for a proof of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, *"My Lord gives life and causes death."* Every person understands that fact well. A man cannot even secure his own life, let alone grant life to another. Either because of lack of understanding, or merely to prolong the altercation, Nimrūd responded by saying, *"I give life and cause death!"* To substantiate his absurd remark, he summoned two people who had previously been sentenced to death. He had killed the one and the other released. A simple reply to this foolishness is that who was it that granted life to the person whom he apparently killed? Did Nimrūd (with regard to the second person) grant him life after death, or was it merely allowing him to continue living?

Understanding the ignorance of his adversary, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام then presented another proof to the fact that Allāh is indeed in control of the entire universe. He said, *"Verily Allāh causes the sun to rise from the east, so you bring it forth from the west!"* Nimrūd was totally flabbergasted upon this challenge

and could not utter another word. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام understood that it was futile convincing the king of how Allāh grants life and death, so he presented a proof that dumbfounded Nimrūd.

Another incident of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is related in Surah Anbiya . Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام once destroyed all the idols of the polytheists. When they found their idols destroyed, they asked him whether he had done it. He told them that the largest of them had done it, so they should ask him. Eventually they admitted that the idols cannot speak. He then told them, *"Do you then worship besides Allāh such things that can neither profit you, nor harm you? Shame on you and those that you worship besides Allāh! Do you not understand?"*

Sayyidina Ammār bin Yāsir رضى الله عنه reports that his wife once applied saffron to his hands because they were cut. When he appeared before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and greeted him, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied to his greeting and without rebuking him, merely told him to wash off the saffron. [*Mishkāt p. 381*]

Another method of teaching is via an indirect message. Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم that Sayyidina Khuraim Asadi was a good person if it were not for his long hair and hanging lower garment. When the news reached Sayyidina Khuraim رضى الله عنه, he immediately cut his hair up to the ears and his garment up to the middle of the calves. [*Mishkāt p. 382*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to refrain from greeting people when they perpetrated a sin, for this was the occasion to chide them. Once the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم noticed a dome. When he asked the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم what this was, the responded by saying that it was the house of a certain Sahabi رضى الله عنه. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم maintained silence. Later, when the same Sahabi رضى الله عنه greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he did not reply to the greeting. Upon enquiry, he was informed of the incident. He then broke down the building without even informing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about it.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw that the building was demolished, he asked the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم about it. They related the incident to him, whereupon he said, "Behold! Every building will be a burden for the owner except that which is necessary." [*Mishkāt p. 441*]

It is learnt from the above narrations that being harsh and scolding people is not the requirement of beautiful exhortation *(Mow'idhatul Hasanah)*. This may be adopted when absolutely necessary, but most .of the time one should be lenient and gentle. Being harsh and uncompromising with one's children may cause them to submit when they are young. However, once they grow older, they become stubborn and impossible to advise.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, "You should hold fast to being gentle and abstain from harshness, for indeed gentleness beautifies anything within which it is present, and anything from which it is removed will be destroyed."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said, "The person deprived of gentleness is deprived of all good."

Another method to correct peoples actions is by severing relations with them. However, this should be done only for a short period until they change and not indefinitely. In today's times sinners are pleased when the pious sever relations with them because they do not want to be reprimanded. For this reason it is best to maintain relations with them so that the opportunity may present itself when they could be influenced.

It has been mentioned that da'wah (*preaching*) is useless when the preacher cannot recognise the appropriate time and gauge the attitude of the person he is addressing.

Attaining Allāh's pleasure should be paramount in the mind of the preacher. He should never chide anyone with the intention of satisfying his personal grudge. The intention should be the person's welfare, otherwise the da'wah will be useless.

Allāh then says, *'Indeed your Lord knows best who strays from His path and He knows best who the rightly guided ones are."* This knowledge is only with Allāh. The preacher should continue in his efforts and never grow despondent. Even if others do not respond to his da'wah, he will certainly benefit in both worlds.

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا۟ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُم بِهِۦ ۖ وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّـٰبِرِينَ ﴿126﴾ وَٱصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِى ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ ﴿127﴾ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ وَّٱلَّذِينَ هُم مُّحْسِنُونَ ﴿128﴾

(126) When you claim retribution, then avenge yourself in proportion to the aggression perpetrated against you. But if you exercise patience, then this is definitely best for the patient ones. (127) Be patient.' Your patience is from Allāh only. Do not grieve over them and do not be saddened by their plotting. (128) Undoubtedly Allāh is with those who adopt piety (taqwa) and those who adopt the path of good.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RETRIBUTION AND THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that in the battle of Uhud, many of the bodies of the Muslim martyrs were mutilated by the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. The Muslims were very much grieved over this and said that they will do the same to the disbelievers *(kuffār)* the next time that they clash in battle. They also undertook to mutilate their bodies and treat them like no Arab has ever done before.

One of the martyrs at Uhud was the beloved uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Hamzah رضى الله عنه. His body was also terribly mutilated. Upon seeing his body, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that, in the next battle, he would mutilate the bodies of seventy disbelievers *(kuffār)* in lieu of what they had done to his uncle. It was in response to this that Allāh revealed the above verse.

Allāh says, *"When you claim retribution, then avenge yourself in proportion to the*

aggression perpetrated against you." It is not permissible to extract more vengeance than what was done. However, Allāh then states, *"But if you exercise patience (and do not avenge yourself), then this is definitely best for the patient Ones."*

When this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم declared that he would exercise patience and forget about avenging the deaths of the martyrs.

Allāh continues to say, *"Be patient! Your patience is from Allāh only. Do not grieve over them and do not be saddened by their plotting. Undoubtedly Allāh is with those who adopt piety (taqwa) and those who adopt the path of good."* Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم were imbued with these qualities, they were assured of Allāh's assistance. Therefore Islām continued to prosper despite the efforts of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* to stem its tide.

PART FIFTEEN

سورة الاسراء

Makkan	Surah Al-Isra	Verses 111

سُبْحَٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْأَقْصَا ٱلَّذِى
بَٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُۥ لِنُرِيَهُۥ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِنَآ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Pure is that Being Who transported His slave by night from Masjidul Harām to Masjidul Aqsa, the vicinity of which We have blessed, to show him Our signs. Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing.

ALLĀH TRANSPORTS THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IN A SINGLE NIGHT FROM THE MASJIDUL HARĀM TO MASJIDUL AQSA AND THEN TO THE SEVEN HEAVENS

This verse is the beginning of Surah Bani Isra'īl, also termed Surah Isra because of the description of the miraculous journey of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to the heavens.

Allāh says in Surah Najm that He showed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم great signs in the heavens like the Sidratul Muntahā. Surah Bani Isra'īl speaks of the journey of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to Masjidul Aqsa, which is technically referred to as the "Isra" The next phase of the journey from Masjidul Aqsa to the heavens has been described in detail in the Ahadīth, and is referred to as the ascension *(Mi'rāj)*.

Allāh begins by saying, *"Pure is that Being..."* This phrase serves to refute the claim of many past and present sceptics who doubt the power of Allāh to transport His beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to all these destinations in less than a single night. Allāh states that He is Pure from their doubts and the iniquities that they attribute to Him. Allāh has the total power to do as He pleases.

"Who transported His slave?" In this part of the verse Allāh attests to the fact

that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a true *"slave"* of His. The rank of being Allāh's slave is indeed a lofty and noble rank. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the most beloved names to Allāh are Abdullāh (the slave of Allāh) and Abdur Rahmān (the slave of Rahmān). [*"Mishkāt" p. 409*]

Once an angel came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "Your Lord has conveyed Salāms to you. He has asked whether you would prefer to be a Prophet who is a slave or one who is a king?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم looked to Jibr'īl عليه السلام for advice, and he advised that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم adopt humility. Thereupon, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he preferred being a Prophet who is a slave.

The narrator of this Hadith, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها, says that thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never leaned on a pillow while eating and would say, "I eat like a slave eats and sit like a slave sits." [*"Mishkāt" p.521*]

One of the reasons for using the word *"slave"* is that no one should ever be deceived into believing that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was any more than Allāh's slave because of the fact that he ascended to such heights. They should never think that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was like Allāh in any way, nor a member of Allāh's family, like the Christians and other Polytheists think of others.

The *"Masjidul Harām"* refers to the mosque *(Masjid)* that surrounds the Ka'ba. The word is also sometimes used for the entire area adjacent to the Ka'ba, usually referred to as the Haram.

"Masjidul Aqsa" refers to the mosque *(Masjid)* at Baitul Muqaddas in Jerusalem. The word *"Aqsa"* literally means something that is extremely far. This mosque *(Masjid)* is called the Masjidul Aqsa because, according to some, it is far from the people of Hijāz (the area where Madinah and Makkah are situated). Others say that it has this name because it is 'the furthest of the three mosques *(Masjids)* that should be visited (it lies at 40 day's camel journey from the Masjidul Harām). Others say that it has this name because it is far removed from impurities and filth.

Describing Masjidul Aqsa, Allāh says, "..... *the vicinity of which We have blessed...*" From a religious perspective, the Masjidul Aqsa has been blessed because it was a place of worship for all the Prophets عليهم السلام and it was also their Qibla. It is also blessed because it is one of the three Masjids which our Shari'ah permits us to specially undertake a journey to visit. There are also many Prophets عليهم السلام buried all around it. From a worldly perspective it is blessed because it is situated in a fertile land that abounds with rivers and vegetation.

Allāh says that he took the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on this journey *"to show him Our signs."* Allāh's power can be witnessed from the fact that He took the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in such a short while across a vast tract of land and then to the heavens where he met so many Prophets عليهم السلام.

"Undoubtedly, He is the All Hearing, the All Seeing." Allāh hears all du'ās (*supplications*) and He is able to protect one in the darkness of the night when none other can see [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*].

It is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah that Allāh took the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم physically in a conscious state from the Masjidul Harām to the Masjidul Aqsa. From there Allāh took him on a tour of the seven heavens and then returned him to Makkah. All this transpired in a single night.

A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE ASCENSION *(MI'RĀJ)*

We will first quote the hadith of Muslim concerning ascension *(Mi'rāj)* because it contains mention of the journey from the Masjidul Harām to Masjidul Aqsa (Isra). No narration of Bukhari contains this part of the journey.

MOUNTING THE BURĀQ AND LEADING THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام IN SALĀH IN MASJIDUL AQSA

Muslim reports from Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them, "The Burāq was brought to me. It was a long white animal that was larger than a donkey but smaller than a mule. Its step is as far as the eyes can see. I mounted it and it took me to Masjidul Aqsa, where I bound it to the same ring to which the Prophets عليهم السلام used to bind their animals. I entered the Masjid, performed two rakāhs Salāh and then came out. Jibr'īl عليه السلام offered me two goblets, the one contained wine and the other contained milk. I drank the milk, whereupon Jibr'īl عليه السلام said, 'You have chosen the natural way."

"We then proceeded to the heavens. On the first I met Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and on the second I met Sayyidina Isā and Yahya عليه السلام. On the third I met Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, on the fourth I met Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام, on the fifth I met Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام and on the sixth I met Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. All of them greeted me with 'Marhaba' *(Welcome)*. Then I met Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام on the seventh heaven. He was reclining against the Baitul Ma'mūr, which is entered every day by seventy thousand angels who are never able to return to it again."

"Then I was taken to the Lote - tree *(Sidratul Muntaha)*. There I saw that the leaves of this tree were as large as the ears of elephants and the fruits were as large as water jugs. When the Lote - tree *(Sidratul Muntaha)* is enveloped by the things that Allāh orders, it changes form and becomes so beautiful that no creation can describe."

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه mentions that gold butterflies envelop the Lote - tree *(Sidratul Muntaha)*. [*Muslim v. 1 p.97*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم continues to say, "At that juncture Allāh revealed to me what He willed and ordained the fifty daily and nightly Salāh. As I was descending, I passed by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. He asked me what my Lord had ordained for me. I replied that Allāh had made fifty Salāh incumbent. He told me to return to Allāh and to request that the number be reduced because my Ummah would be unable to bear this. He said that he had already experienced the Bani Isra'īl"

"I returned to my Lord and requested, 'O my Lord! Lessen the number for my Ummah.' Allāh reduced the number by five. When I passed by Sayyidina

Mūsa عليه السلام and informed him that Allāh had reduced the number by five Salāh, he told me to go back and ask for a further reduction since my Ummah will not be able to offer so many. I then went to and forth until the number was reduced to five. Allāh said, 'O Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم)! These five Salāh are ordained. I shall confer the reward of ten Salāh for every one of these so that they total the reward of fifty Salāh. Whoever intends a good deed will receive the reward of it without performing it. Whoever will perform the deed will receive the reward of ten deeds. However, when a person intends an evil deed, this intention will not be regarded as a sin. When he carries out the evil, only then is it recorded as a single sin."

"I then returned and, when I informed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that the number had been reduced to five, he told me to return to Allāh for a further reduction. This time I told him that I was too ashamed to return to Allāh so many times." [*v. 1 p.91*]

Muslim (*v. 1 p.96*) reports another narration from Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه, in which it is mentioned that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم found himself among all the Prophets عليهم السلام in Masjidul Aqsa. When the time came for Salāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led the Prophets عليهم السلام in Salāh. When the Salāh was over, someone told him to meet the doorkeeper of Hell. Before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could greet him, he already greeted with Salām.

According to a narration of Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه reported in "Ibn Kathīr" (*v. 3 p.6*) from Ibn Abi Hātim, it is narrated that all the people gathered in Masjidul Aqsa formed rows after the adhān was given. As they all waited for an Imām to lead the Salāh, Jibr'īl عليه السلام took the hand of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and led him to the front to lead the Salāh. After the Salāh, Jibr'īl عليه السلام asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if he knew who the people gathered there were. When he replied in the negative, Jibr'īl عليه السلام told him that they were all the Prophets عليهم السلام that Allāh had sent on earth. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and Jibr'īl عليه السلام proceeded to the heavens.

THE DETAILS OF ASCENSION *(MI'RĀJ)* ACCORDING TO THE NARRATION OF BUKHARI

Bukhari has reported the incident of ascension *(Mi'rāj)* from Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه, who narrated from Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه and, at times, from Sayyidina Malik bin Sa'sa'ah رضى الله عنه.

Narrating from Sayyidina Mālik رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه says that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that he was near the Ka'ba in a state of semi-consciousness. Three people came to him with a golden tray filled with wisdom and Belief *(Imān)*. They cut open his chest, washed it with the water of Zam Zam and then filled it with the wisdom and Belief *(Imān)* from the tray. They then closed the chest and brought a white animal that was larger than a donkey, but smaller than a mule.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS TAKEN TO THE HEAVENS, THE DOORS ARE OPENED AND HE MEETS THE HOLY PROPHETS WHO GREET HIM WITH WELCOME *(MARHABA)*

According to this narration of Bukhari, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم stated that Jibr'īl عليه السلام took him to the nearest heaven and requested the doorkeeper to open. The doorkeeper asked who was with him. He replied that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was with him. The doorkeeper then asked whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent for. When Jibr'īl عليه السلام replied in the affirmative, the doorkeeper exclaimed, "Marhaba!" and opened the door. It was also said that the arrival was indeed blessed.

As they ascended further they met Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم greeted him and he replied, "Marhaba *(Welcome)* to a son and the Holy Prophet!"

They then proceeded to the second heaven, where the same procedure of entry was followed by Jibr'īl عليه السلام. When they entered this heaven, they met Sayyidina Isā and Yahya عليهما السلام. They greeted by saying, "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet!" In a like manner they then ascended to the third heaven, where they met Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. He also greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet!"

Next they reached the fourth heaven in the same manner, where they met Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم greeted him he also replied by saying, "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet !"

To enter the fifth heaven, Jibr'īl عليه السلام had to repeat the formalities and, when the door was opened, they met Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام. He also replied to the greeting of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet!"

Upon reaching the sixth heaven in a like manner, they met Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, who also greeted by saying, "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet!" As they proceeded further, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام began to weep. When he was asked why he wept, he replied. "A young man [i.e. Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent as the Holy Prophet after me and his followers to enter Heaven *(Jannah)* will be better than my followers." According to another narration, he said, *"The followers of this Prophet who will enter Heaven (Jannah) will be more than my followers who will enter Heaven (Jannah)."*

Thereafter they entered the seventh heaven in the same manner. There they met Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, who greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the words, "Marhaba to a son and the Holy Prophet!" (This was how Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also used the same words because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was from his progeny).

THE BAITUL MA'MŪR AND THE LOTE - TREE *(SIDRATUL MUNTAHĀ)*

Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم came to the Baitul Ma'mūr. When

he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام what this was, he was told that it was the Baitul Ma'mūr, and that seventy thousand angels perform Salāh there daily. These angels never again have the opportunity to return there.

Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was taken to the Sidratul Muntahā, the fruit of which were as large as the water jugs of Hijr and the leaves were the size of elephant's ears. Emerging from the roots of the Sidratul Muntahā, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم noticed four rivers. Two were transcendental and the other two were apparent. When he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام what these were, the reply was that the two transcendental rivers were of the rivers of Heaven *(Jannah)*, while the other two were the Euphrates and the Nile rivers.

Historians write that Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام was the grandfather of' Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. All the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام stem from Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Therefore, Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام also becomes the great forefather of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم If this is true, then he should also have greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the words, "Marhaba to a son and the Holy Prophet!" instead of the words "Marhaba to you, a brother and the Holy Prophet!" If the theory of the historians is correct then the reply to this apparent objection is that Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام chose to rather call the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by the link of brotherhood that all the Prophets عليهم السلام share by virtue of all being Prophets عليهم السلام. He could have also called the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a brother as a mark of respect.

The two transcendental rivers that flowed seem to be the river of Kauthar and the river of Mercy. Both of these are subsidiaries of the Salsabīl river. It is possible that the confluence of these two rivers is at another root of the Sidratul Muntahā.

The fact that the Euphrates and the Nile find their source in the heavens may be explained by assuming that the rainwater, which supplies these two with water, comes from the Sidratul Muntahā.. From there it descends as rain to fill these two. [*Ibn Kathīr v. 3 p. 12*]

FIFTY SALĀH ARE ORDAINED AND THEY ARE THEN REDUCED TO FIVE AT THE INSISTENCE OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then continues to relate that fifty Salāh were made compulsory for his Ummah. Upon returning, he passed by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, who asked what was ordained for the Ummah. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that fifty Salāhs were ordained, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, "I know people better than you do. I exerted myself greatly with the Bani Isra'īl (but they could not bear to perform so many Salāhs). Indeed your Ummah will not be able to perform so many Salāhs. Go and request your Lord for a reduction."

Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned to Allāh and the number of Salāh was reduced to 40. Again Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام repeated what he had said earlier and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned to Allāh. The number was then dropped to 30. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم again passed by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, he entreated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه

وسلم return again.

Thereafter the number was reduced to 20 and, later, to ten. When a further reduction was requested, Allāh reduced it to five. However, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام insisted that this was also too much. When matters reached this point, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that he was now too ashamed to return to Allāh. Thereupon Allāh announced, "I have retained the initial order and granted a concession for My bondsmen. I have multiplied the reward of a single deed tenfold (therefore the reward of five Salāh will be like that of fifty Salāh)."

The above narration appears on p. 455 of Bukhari. Another narration on p. 471 [narrated by Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه from Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه] states that after being greeted by Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Jibr'īl عليه السلام took the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to a place where they could hear the sounds of pens writing. It was after this that mention is made of the Salāh being reduced from fifty, to five. Thereafter it is mentioned that Allāh announced, *"The decree that proceeds from Me shall never be altered."* (i.e. The reward for fifty will still be attained).

This narration also mentions that the Sidratul Muntahā was enveloped with various colours that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم could not fathom. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was then allowed to enter Jannah, where the domes were made of pearls and where musk took the place of sand.

On p. *548*, Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه reports a hadith from Sayyidina Mālik bin Sa'sa'ah رضى الله عنه which mentions that after witnessing the Baitul Ma'mūr, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was offered a goblet of wine, a goblet of honey and a goblet of milk. When he drank the milk, Jibr'īl عليه السلام said that this was the natural way (Islām) for him and his Ummah.

This narration contains the addition that when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to return to Allāh the last time, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I asked my Lord until I have become ashamed. Now I am content and I have accepted." [The narration of Bukhari ends here.]

TWO MORE FAVOURS BESIDES SALĀH

In addition to the favour of five Salāh that equal to fifty in reward, Allāh also bestowed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the concluding verses (285 and 286) of Surah Baqarah (from "Āmanar Rasūl" until the end of the Surah).

The other favour was the declaration that even the major sins of this Ummah will be forgiven if they abstain from polytheism *(shirk)*. [Muslim v. 1 p.97] This means that they will be forgiven without punishment if they repent, or that they will have to suffer only a small amount of punishment before being admitted into Heaven *(Jannah)*.

SEEING ALLĀH IN ASCENSION *(MI'RĀJ)*

There is a difference of opinion about whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Allāh in ascension *(Mi'rāj)* or not. There is also a difference about whether the sighting was with the physical eyes or with the heart (*spiritual*).

The majority of the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم and the epigones *(Tabi'īn)* are of the opinion that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw Allāh with his physical eyes. The research scholars also share this opinion, which is voiced by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. However, Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها refutes this.

Allāh says in Surah Najm, "... *(he) then approached and drew close.*" Allāh also says, *"He certainly saw him once more at the 'Sidratul Muntahā'. Sayyidah Ayshah* رضى الله عنها says that these verses refer to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم seeing Jibr'īl عليه السلام in his original form with 600 wings, spanning the horizons. Normally the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw him in the form of a human being.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that Jibr'īl عليه السلام is referred to in the verses of Surah Najm, where Allāh says, "..... *(he) then approached and drew close. And was as close as two bows or even closer*" and the verse *"He definitely saw some of Allāh's great signs."* [*Muslim with the commentary of Imām Nawawi* رحمة الله عليه, v. 1 p. *97,98*]

THE DENIAL OF THE QURAYSH

Upon his return from ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم chanced upon a trade caravan of the Quraysh that was returning from Syria. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم related the incident to the people the following day, they scoffed and reported the incident to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه asked them whether they were speaking the truth. They swore that this was what the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had told them. Thereupon Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said, "If he [the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] said this, then it is the truth."

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* expressed surprise that he could believe this, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه told them that he believed the even more astonishing facts that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم received revelation from the skies. It was on account of this that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه was given the title of "Siddique." [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihāyah" v. 2 p.360*]

ALLĀH DISPLAYS BAITUL MUQADDAS BEFORE THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

The Quraysh had seen Baitul Muqaddas on their journeys. They therefore asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to explain certain details of Baitul Muqaddas, like how many pillars and doors there were. At that time, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was sitting in the Hatīm. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says that he was never so perplexed as he was at that time because he never thought of taking note of such details (nobody would!). However, Allāh caused the entire Baitul Muqaddas to be brought before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he was able to accurately answer all the questions posed by the Quraysh. [*Muslim v. 1 p.92 and Bukhari v. 1 p.548*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports '(*v. 2 p.15*) that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied to all the questions, the people swore that he was telling the truth.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also told the people that when he was going

to Baitul Muqaddas, he passed by a certain caravan. He told them that these people had lost a camel and were searching for it. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them where their camel was before proceeding further. He mentioned that when he was returning, he passed them again while they were asleep at a place called Sahnān. There was a utensil of water with them that was covered with a lid of some sort. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he removed the lid and drank some water, after which he replaced the lid in exactly the same manner as they had done. (Arabs normally do not object to someone taking something trivial like water without permission).

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Quraysh that this caravan would soon be emerging from a valley of Tan'īm. He described to them the colour of the leading camel and added that it will be carrying two satchels, one being black and the other white. The people rushed to Tan'īm to see whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was truthful. When they got there they saw the exact scene as described by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

They then asked the people of the caravan whether they had kept water in a utensil that night. They replied that they had covered their utensil of water in a certain manner, but found later that it was covered in the same manner with the water missing. They then asked the people of the caravan whether any of their camels had strayed away. They replied that one of their camels had done so, but that they heard a person guiding them to a particular direction where they found their camel.

According to certain narrations, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even greeted the caravan with Salām and some of them said that it was the voice of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

SOME OTHER THINGS WITNESSED ON ASCENSION *(MI'RĀJ)*

There were other things that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw while on ascension *(Mi'rāj)*. These have been enumerated by Imām Bayhaqi رحمة الله عليه in "Dalā'ilun Nabuwwa" (*v.* 2), by Hāfiz Nūrud Dīn Haythami رحمة الله عليه in "Majmauz Zawāid" (*v.* 1), by Allāma Muhammad bin Muhammad Sulaymān Al Maghribi رحمة الله عليه in "Jam'ul Fawāid" (*v.* 3), by Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه in his exegesis *(tafsīr)* and by Allāma Ibn Hishām رحمة الله عليه in his "Sīrah" (biography) of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Some of these have already been mentioned and others are narrated below. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *saw Sayyidina Mūsa* عليه السلام *performing Salāh in his grave: Sayyidina Anas* رضى الله عنه *reports that the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *said, "When I was taken on ascension (Mi'rāj), I passed by the grave of Sayyidina Mūsa* رضى الله عنه*. He was performing Salāh there. "[Muslim 'v. 2 p.3 68]*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *saw people whose lips were being cut with scissors: Sayyidina Anas* رضى الله عنه *also reports that the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *told them that he passed by some people whose lips were being cut with scissors of fire. 'When he asked! Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *who these people were, the reply was that they were those lecturers of his Ummah who used to enjoin others to do good but*

forgot (to do good) themselves. According to another narration, he said that they were those lecturers who did not practise what they instructed others to. ["Mishkāt" p. 438]

People who scrape their chests with their nails: Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه *narrates that the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *told them that on the night of ascension (Mi'rāj) he saw people whose nails were of copper. They were busy lacerating their faces and their chests with their nails. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *who these people were, the reply was that they were those who ate the flesh of people (i.e. they engaged in backbiting) and they sought to defame people. ["Mishkāt" p. 429]*

The terrible plight of the usurers: Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه *narrates that the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *told them that on the night of ascension (Mi'rāj) he saw people whose stomachs were the size of dwellings. In there were snakes that were visible from the outside, 'Then he asked Sayyidina Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *who these people were, the reply was that they were those who consumed usury. [Mishkāt" p. 246]*

People whose skins are cut with scissors: Sayyidina Rāshid bin Sa'd رضى الله عنه *reports that when the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *went for ascension (Mi'rāj) he saw that the skins of certain people were being cut with scissors of fire. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *who these people were, the reply was that they were those who beautified themselves for fornication. He then passed by a pit that emitted a terribly foul odour. Heinous screams came from there. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *who these people were, the reply was that these were those women who adorned themselves for adultery and committed those acts that were unlawful (Harām) for them. ["At Targhīb wat Tarhīb" v. 3 p. 51]*

A Devil (Shaytān) chases the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم*: Yahya bin Saīd* رضى الله عنه *reports in the "Mu'atta" of Imām Mālik* رحمة الله عليه *that when the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *was taken on ascension (Mi'rāj), a Devil (Shaytān) began to chase him with a spark of flame in his hands. Wherever the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *looked, he could see the Devil (Shaytān). Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *told the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, 'Should I not teach you certain words by which his flame will be extinguished and he will fall on his face?" 'When the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *asked to be informed Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *recited the following words:*

{**TRANSLATION:** "With Allāh's munificent countenance and with His complete words that no good or evil being can evade, I seek protection from the evil that descends from the sky, the evil that ascends to it, the evil that enters the earth, the evil that emerges from it, the tribulations of the night and day and from the tidings of the night and day except the tidings of good, O the Most Merciful!"}

The angels encourage the cupping of blood: Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضی اللہ عنہ *reports that during the ascension (Mi'rāj) the Holy Prophet* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *was encouraged by every group of angels that he passed [to instruct his Ummah to cup blood? ['Mishkat" p.389]*

The cupping of blood was common among the Arabs, and even the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم had blood cupped from between his shoulders and from his head. This is a very effective cure for high blood pressure, a disease that is common today.

The reward of the Mujāhidīn: Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ *relates that the Holy Prophet* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *saw on the night of ascension (Mi'rāj) that certain people were planting seeds and harvesting them on the same day. 'When they harvested; the plants again reappeared 'When he asked? Jibr'īl* علیہ السلام *who these people were, the reply was that these were those who strove in Alllaah 's way. Their rewards, he said; will be multiplied by seven hundred and they will receive the rewards of everything they spend?*

The heads of some people are crushed with a rock: Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *passed by people whose heads were being repeatedly crushed by a rock. Their heads regained their natural form after every strike. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* علیہ السلام *who these people were, the reply was that these were the people who were lazy to perform their Salāh. 'They slept without performing their Salāh.*

The terrible plight of those who do not pay zakāh: Then they passed by people who had only rags wrapped around their private parts. They were grazing like camels and cows on the thorny foul trees and stones of hell (Jahannam). 'When he asked Jibr'īl علیہ السلام *who these people were, the reply was that they were those who did not pay the zakah due on their wealth.*

Those eating rotten meat: The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *also passed by a group of people before whom was a pot of cooked meat and another pot rotting uncooked meat. They were all eating from the pot of rotten meat. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* علیہ السلام *who these people were, the reply was that these were those men of his 'Ummah who fornicate the entire night with adulterous and licentious women while they have lawful wives at home. He also said that these were women who indulged in adultery with other fornicating men while they had lawful husbands.*

The person carrying a large bundle of firewood: The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *also passed by a person who was confronted with an extremely large bundle of firewood that he could not carry, but wanted it to be still larger. 'When he asked Jibr'īl* علیہ السلام *who this person was, the reply was that he was the person who had the trusts of people with him. He could not fulfil the trusts that he had with him, but still wanted to accept more.*

A bull trying to squeeze into a small hole: Thereafter the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by a small hole from which an extremely large bull emerged. 'The bull then attempted to return into the hole. 'When he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام who this was, the reply was that he was the person who uttered an evil word (of sin). He then regretted the utterance and attempted to retract it, which is impossible.

'The fragrance of Heaven (Jannah): Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed by a fragrant valley from which emanated the fragrance of musk, and some sounds. 'When he asked about the place, Jibr'īl عليه السلام said that this was Heaven (Jannah). It was calling out to Allāh saying, 'O my Lord! Bring forth those who shall dwell in me and fulfil Your promise."

The voice of Hell: The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then passed by another valley from which a terribly guttural sound emerged. 'When he asked what place this was, Jibr'īl عليه السلام replied that it was Hell calling to Allāh, "O my Lord Bring forth those who shall dwell in me and fulfil your promise." [Jam'ul Fawāid" v.3 p. 151]

BĀBUL HAFAZAH

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the door of the first heaven is called the "Bābul Hafazah." An angel named Isma'īl is appointed to this door and he has 12 000 angels at his command. Each one of these 12 000 have another 12 000 at their command. Saying this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *'None besides Allāh knows His army."* [*Fat'hul Bāri v. 7 p.209*]

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم MEETS THE KEEPER OF HELL IN THE FIRST HEAVEN AND GETS A VIEW OF HELL

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reached the first heaven closest to earth, all the angels met him smilingly and prayed for him. One of them met him and prayed for him but was not smiling and happy like the others. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام about him, the reply was, "He is Mālik, the keeper of Hell. If he could smile for anyone before you or after you, he would have certainly smiled to you now. This angel never smiles."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم requested Jibr'īl عليه السلام to ask Mālik if he could see Hell. When Jibr'īl عليه السلام told him to show Hell to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Mālik lifted the lid of Hell. Upon doing this, the fire, in its fury leapt out of the opening. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told Jibr'īl عليه السلام to tell Mālik to return the fire to its place. When he did so, the fire subsided and the lid was replaced. [*Sīrah of Ibn Hishām p.249*]

MILK, HONEY AND WINE ARE OFFERED TO THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم AND HE DRINKS THE MILK

The previous narrated hadith of Muslim (*p. 91*) mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was offered the milk and wine in Baitul Muqaddas. Another narration on p. 95 by Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه mentions that this occurred at the Sidratul Muntahā. On the other hand, the narration of

Bukhari reports that three goblets (the third containing honey) were presented before the Baitul Ma'mūr.

There is no discrepancy between these narrations because it is very possible that the incident occurred on all three occasions. The addition of honey in the narration of Bukhari should not surprise us since it frequently happens that one narrator may recall something that another may omit.

A narration on p. 97 of Muslim reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم drank the milk, Jibr'īl عليه السلام said that had he has taken the wine, his Ummah would have gone astray. It is learnt from this that the character of a leader impacts upon the followers.

"Fat'hul Bāri" (*v. 7 p.215*) reports from Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه that when a child is born, the first nourishment that it receives is milk. Since every child is born as a follower of "the natural way" (Islām), this seems to be the relationship between drinking milk and the statement of Jibr'īl عليه السلام, when he told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (when he drank the milk), "This is the natural way (Islām) on which you and your Ummah are."

Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that a close study of the Ahadīth will reveal that four drinks were presented to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These were milk, wine, honey and water. (It is also possible that the water was as sweet as honey, because of which it may be described as honey.) It should be borne in mind that wine was not yet unlawful *(Harām)* at the time of ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, since it only became unlawful *(Harām)* in Madinah. However, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not chose the wine because wine is intoxicating.

Honey is usually consumed for enjoyment, not as a source of nourishment. Therefore, it is a depiction of the pleasures of this world. Water is an aid to nourishment and not a source of nourishment in itself. Its example is like the world, that is an aid to practise religion *(D'īn)*, not religion *(D'īn)* itself. Milk, on the other hand is a source of nourishment on its own just as religion *(D'īn)* is the real spiritual nourishment for the soul. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم chose to drink the milk. [*Fat'hul Bāri v. 7 p.2 15*]

Ibn Kathīr (*v. 3 p.5*) reports from Bayhaqi that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم drank the milk, Jibr'īl عليه السلام said, "Had you drunk the water, your Ummah would have drowned (in their obsession for this world) and if you had drunk the wine, they would all have strayed from the straight path (just as a drunk person does)."

WHAT IS THE SIDRATUL MUNTAHĀ?

The Arabic word "Sidrah" means a lotus or a jujube tree. "Muntahā" means the 'limit' or 'apex' i.e. a point beyond which there is nothing more. According to a narration of Muslim, the tree has been named as such because all the commands of Allāh from above stop at this tree and all the actions of people ascending from below also stop here. All these stop here first before proceeding further.

It has already been mentioned that no creation can describe the beauty of this tree when it is covered by whatever Allāh wills. Another narration reports

that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that it is covered by golden butterflies. Another hadith states that a rider can ride for a hundred years in the shadow of a single branch of this tree. Another narration states that a hundred riders can be shaded beneath it.

ENTRY INTO HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* AND A SIGHT OF THE RIVER OF KAUTHAR

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that when he was walking in Heaven *(Jannah)*, he saw a river, at both ends of which stood domes of hollow pearl. When he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام what this was, the reply was that it was the river of Kauthar that Allāh had granted to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says that when he looked closer, he saw that the bed of the river was pure fragrant musk. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 974*]

SOME NOTES AND THE INNER WISDOM OF ASCENSION *(MI'RĀJ)*

A description of the Burāq. The word "Burāq" is either derived from the word "barīq" (meaning white) or from the word "barq" (meaning lightning). It is therefore appropriately named because of its lightning speed. "Bayhaqi" (*v. 2 p.390*) has reported that other Prophets عليهم السلام also rode the Burāq.

The reason for the uneasiness of the Burāq. Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم that the Burāq was reigned and saddled. The Burāq began to skip about, when Jibr'īl عليه السلام said, "You are skipping about with Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) on your back? None more honoured and revered to Allāh than Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has ever mounted your back!" Hearing this, the Burāq broke out in a sweat and stopped its action.

A narration of "Dalā'ilun Nabuwwah" reports that Jibr'īl عليه السلام twisted Burāq's ear to stop its jostling before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mounted. [*v. 2 p. 355*]

Certain narration reports that Jibr'īl عليه السلام made a hole in a rock and bound the Burāq to it when they dismounted in Baitul Muqaddas. [*Fat'hul Bāri v. 7 p.207*]

Some commentators have mentioned that the Burāq behaved in this manner because none had mounted it during the long period of cessation (between Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when there were no Prophets). Now that it was mounted after a long time, it began to gleam with pride and joy. Others say that it did so because it was proud that the best and the last of the Prophets عليهم السلام was to mount it. [*Fat'hul Bāri v. 7 p.207*]

In a similar way the mountain of Thabīr began to tremble when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه stood on it. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the mountain to remain still because the Prophet, a Siddique and two martyrs were upon it. [*"Mishkāt" p. 542*]

Allāh could have transported the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without the Burāq, but He used the Burāq to show honour and respect to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. A person who is not mounted will be said to be on foot, and a mounted person is regarded to be more honourable than one who is on foot.

JIBR'ĪL عليه السلام MOUNTS WITH THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم UNTIL BAITUL MUQADDAS AND THEN TAKES THE REIGNS UP TO THE HEAVENS

Jibr'īl عليه السلام also mounted the Burāq from Masjidul Ḥarām and sat behind the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. After dismounting at Baitul Muqaddas and performing Salāh there, Jibr'īl عليه السلام brought reigns that were extremely beautiful to lead the Burāq to the heavens. According to some narrations, one of the reigns was made of gold and the other of silver. Another narration reports that they were encrusted with pearls. Certain Ahadīth report that there were angels on the left and the right of the two as they ascended to the heavens. [*Fat'hul Bāri v. 7 p.307/8/97*]

Why did the doorkeepers of the heavens ask Jibr'īl عليه السلام who was with him and whether the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been sent for? The answer to this question is that the doorkeepers expected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that night, but asked this question to enhance the honour of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to express their happiness at his arrival. They asked who was with Jibr'īl عليه السلام to express to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that his name was known in the heavens. It was for this reason that they did not ask who Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was when Jibr'īl عليه السلام answered their query.

Another reason for these inquiries was to make the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم aware that he was a special guest in the heavens. It is common knowledge that when guests frequent a place, no questions are asked at the door. However, when guests are specially sent for, it denotes their noble status and honour. None before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and none after him have ever received the honour of ascension *(Mi'rāj)*.

When a guest knocks at the door and is questioned, the inhabitants of the place pay particular attention to the arrival. Here the same was done so that all the inhabitants of the heavens take cognisance of the arrival of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and so that he does not pass by unnoticed.

Because the purpose of ascension *(Mi'rāj)* was not to meet all the inhabitants of the heavens, the angels merely greeted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as he passed by them on the way to the seventh heaven. When a notable guest arrives in any country, a welcoming committee is formed to receive him. Every person rushes to be first so that they can receive the opportunity to meet the person. However, in the heavens that system is so perfect that every inhabitant was able to meet the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without causing any delay in the journey.

Why did Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام not request the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to ask Allāh for a reduction in the number of Salāh? The Scholars *(Ulama)* have replied to this question by saying that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام is the friend of Allāh. The requirement of the deep affinity that had to Allāh was that he accept Allāh's decrees without question.

On the other hand, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was "Kalīmulāh" i.e. the one to whom Allāh spoke directly. When a person has the courage to speak to another, it means that they share a bond that is more candid and spontaneous. Therefore, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was more able to prompt the request before Allāh.

Another reply is that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام spent most of his life propagating oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to the polytheists and the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Those people who followed him were all pious and submissive people, unlike the Bani Isra'īl whom Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had to contend with. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام had not experienced the type of people who were rebellious and negligent towards Allāh's commandments, so he could not foresee the consequences of ordaining fifty Salāh.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام placed the welfare of the Ummah before him when he thought that they would benefit more in terms of rewards if they were to perform fifty Salāh. It was for this reason that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام even sent a message (quoted below) to the Ummah via the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the night in which he was taken for ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, he met Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام who said to him, "O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم! Convey my Salāms (greetings) to your Ummah and tell them that the soil of Heaven *(Jannah)* is excellent and the water is fine. Heaven *(Jannah)* is an empty ground and its plants are, ***"SubhānAllāhi Wal Hamdu Lilāhi Wa Lā Ilāha Illalāhu Allāhu Akbar'."*** [*"Mishkāt" p. 202*]

These words and other actions serve to fill Heaven *(Jannah)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that recitation of ***"Subhā NAllāhil Azīm Wa Bi Hamdihi"*** will cause a tree to be planted for one in Heaven *(Jannah)*.

The heart of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is washed with the water of Zam Zam in a golden tray: In today's times none will object to the feasibility of this operation because of the widespread practice of surgery. This fact displays the virtue of Zam Zam. Although the use of golden utensils is forbidden for the Ummah, a golden tray was used by the angels in this case. It should also be borne in mind that when this incident occurred, this law had not yet been revealed. The prohibition of gold utensils was revealed in Madinah.

The fact that the heart of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was filled with Belief *(Imān)* and wisdom tells us that the strength of his Belief *(Imān)* was enhanced and he was granted the ability to perceive the events of the heavens.

THE LOFTY RANK OF SALĀH

Although all other acts of worship were ordained by Allāh in this world via Jibr'īl عليه السلام, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was specially sent for by Allāh to receive the bounty of Salāh in the heavens. The Ummah was also conferred with the privilege of receiving the reward of fifty Salāh for performing only five.

On the occasion of Mi'rāj, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conversed with Allāh and, by bringing down the injunction of Salāh, he allowed the Sahabah رضى الله عنه and the Ummah at large to converse with Allāh. Since Salāh is a means of communication with Allāh, one should observe all its etiquette. One should be in

state of ablution *(wudhu)*, have clean clothes, face the Qibla, recite the Qur'ān, prostrate and make kneeling *(ruku)*, all with complete humility and concentration. These are all postures that are not prescribed in any other act of worship.

According to certain commentators of hadith, the *"Tashahhud"* recited at the end of Salāh is a repetition of the words mentioned on the occasion of ascension *(Mi'rāj)*. They say that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم praised Allāh by saying, ***"At Tahiyyātu Lillāhi Was Salawātu Wat Tayyibāt"*** ("All devotions offered through words, bodily actions and wealth are due to Allāh"). Thereafter Allāh responded to this by saying, ***"As Salāmu Alaika Ayyuhan Nabiyyu Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakātu"*** ("Peace be upon you, O the Holy Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings"). Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ***"As Salāmu Alaynā Wa Alā Ibādillahis Sālihīn"*** ("Peace be on us and on the righteous servants of Allāh").

Thereafter Jibr'īl عليه السلام hastily declared the testification of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and Risālah by saying, ***"Ash Hadu Allā Ilāha Illalāhu Wa Ash Hadu Anna Muhammadan Abduhu wa Rasūluh"*** ("I testify that there is none worthy of worship besides Allāh and I testify that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is His servant and messanger").

Since Salāh is a conversation with Allāh, one is instructed to be attentive and place something before one so that none passes by to distract the attention. Salāh is not permissible when one has an urgent need to relieve oneself or to eat. This is so because nothing should distract one from one's attention to Allāh.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's attention is continuously focussed on a person in Salāh as long as the person does not deviate his attention from Allāh. When the servant diverts his attention, Allāh also diverts His attention from him."

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه also narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person is in Salāh, he should not play with the pebbles (on the ground or carry out any other futile act) because Allāh's attention is focussed on him."

THE REPLY TO THE IGNORANT OBJECTION OF THE REJECTERS AND THE IRRELIGIOUS ONES

It is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah that all that has been mentioned above with regard to the journey of ascension *(Mi'rāj)* actually happened to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in a physical state and while he was conscious. However, some modernists claim that the incident could not have occurred. They say that it was all a dream.

Such ignorant people fail to understand that if it were a dream, then why did the polytheists of Makkah refute it? Allāh says in the first verse of Surah Bani Isra'īl that He transported His "slave" to Masjidul Aqsa. This word indicates that both body and soul were transported. Allāh also used the word "Āsrā" which cannot be used to describe a flight in a dream, but a physical journey by night.

These people then say that is impossible for a human to breathe in the upper

stratas of the atmosphere. Firstly, their theories are fallible. Then too, if they are correct, they fail to realise that Allāh has the power to do as He wills. He can cause a person to breath in a vacuum, just as well as He allows him to breath in the atmosphere. Allāh created man to be in need of oxygen. If He willed, He could have made man survive on something else, just as He created the fish to be independent of oxygen.

Some people deny the existence of the heavens. Their lack of knowledge regarding the presence of the heavens cannot be a proof to establish its absence. They seek only to falsify Allāh's Book.

The ancient philosophers claimed that there were nine heavens, while the modern philosophers claim that there are none. How can one base one's understanding on their illogical hypotheses? Allāh declares that He has created seven heavens and this is accepted as the fact. The theories of these philosophers are mere speculations that have no concrete basis and which keep changing.

Allāh is also capable of creating doors to these heavens, as He says in Surah A'rāf, *"The doors of the heavens will not be opened to them."* He says in Surah Naba, *"The skies will be opened and become like doors."*

Surah Infitār, Surah Inshiqāq and other Surahs also explain how the heavens will be torn on the Day of Judgement, disclaiming the theory of those who say that the skies cannot be ruptured.

Prior to the invention of modern means of transport, people doubted that anyone could travel such a great distance in so short a time. Nowadays this doubt has become obsolete, and the journey can well be imagined.

Allāh's power is infinite. As He granted man the ability to develop fast modes of transport, He continues to allow them to develop even faster transportation every day. Allāh says in Surah Nahl with regard to means of transportation, *"He creates such things about which you have no knowledge."* [*Surah 16, verse 8*]

These people should be asked what is the speed at which the earth rotates and travels across the solar system? They should be asked what is the speed of the light that Allāh has created? They accept these speeds to be phenomenal, yet they deny Allāh's power to transport a person in a night!

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was described the speed of the Burāq as being able to place his next as far as he can see. Assuming that his vision reached a hundred miles, he would have reached Masjidul Aqsa and return in less than twenty minutes.

The true believer *(Mu'min)* believes and accepts without question whatever Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم tell them.

وَءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ أَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوا۟ مِن دُونِى وَكِيلًا ﴿٢﴾ ذُرِّيَّةَ مَنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا ﴿٣﴾ وَقَضَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ بَنِىٓ

إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ فِى ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَتُفْسِدُنَّ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَتَعْلُنَّ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٤﴾ فَإِذَا جَآءَ
وَعْدُ أُولَىٰهُمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادًا لَّنَآ أُو۟لِى بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا۟ خِلَٰلَ ٱلدِّيَارِ ۚ وَكَانَ
وَعْدًا مَّفْعُولًا ﴿٥﴾ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ ٱلْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنَٰكُم بِأَمْوَٰلٍ وَبَنِينَ
وَجَعَلْنَٰكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا ﴿٦﴾ إِنْ أَحْسَنتُمْ أَحْسَنتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا ۚ فَإِذَا
جَآءَ وَعْدُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ لِيَسُۥٓـُٔوا۟ وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ أَوَّلَ
مَرَّةٍ وَلِيُتَبِّرُوا۟ مَا عَلَوْا۟ تَتْبِيرًا ﴿٧﴾ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يَرْحَمَكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ عُدتُّمْ عُدْنَا ۘ وَجَعَلْنَا
جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ حَصِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

(2) We granted Mūsa the Book and made it a guidance for the Bani Isra'īl (instructing them) "Do not take another besides Me as a helper." (3) O the progeny of those whom We boarded with Nūh (on the ark)! He was indeed a grateful slave. (4) We announced to the Bani Isra'īl in the Book, "You will certainly cause strife on earth twice and you will reach to towering heights." (5) "When the promise of the first of the two comes, We will send to you such slaves of Ours who will be great warmongers, and they will barge into homes. This is a promise that will be fulfilled." (6) "Thereafter We will restore your authority over them, reinforce you with wealth and children, and greatly multiply your numbers." (7) "If you do good, you will be doing good for yourselves and if you do evil it will be to your detriment. When the second promise will come (We will permit your enemies) to distort your faces, to enter the Masjid as they entered the first time, and to destroy everything they are able to." (8) "The time is nigh that your Lord will have mercy on you. But if you repeat (your actions) We shall repeat (the way-in which you were treated). We have made Hell a prison for the disbelievers."

THE BANI ISRA'ĪL CAUSE CORRUPTION ON EARTH TWICE AND THEIR ENEMIES DESTROY THEM

The above verses also prove the apostleship of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he could not have known the incidents contained in the Qur'ān without receiving them directly from Allāh. These are narratives concerning the Bani Isra'īl and serve as a reminder and advice to them. However, they still chose to reject the truth. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"when what they recognise comes to them, they deny it. Allāh's curse is on the disbelievers."* [*Surah 2, verse 89*]

Allāh says in the above verses, "We granted *Mūsa the Book (Torah) and made it a guidance for the Bani Isrā'īl (instructing them) 'Do not take another besides Me as a helper."'* The Bani Isra'īl acted against the injunctions of the Torah and were made to suffer the consequences in this world as well. They were defeated and disgraced on numerous occasions by their enemies.

Before describing the incident, Allāh reminds them of His favour upon them. Allāh says, *"O the progeny of those whom We boarded with Nūh (on the* ark)!"

By addressing them in this manner, Allāh reminds them that they are from those who were saved from being drowned in the flood. Allāh then says concerning Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, *"Indeed he was a grateful slave."* Therefore the Bani Isra'īl should emulate their forefather in this respect and express their gratitude to Him by carrying out His commands and following the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

"We announced to the Bani Isrā'īl in the Book (in the Torah or in one of their previous booklets), *'You will certainly cause strife on earth* [in Syria *(Shām)*] *twice and you will reach to towering heights."*

Describing the first time that they caused strife by oppressing people and opposing Allāh's commands, Allāh says, *"When the promise of the first of the two comes, We will send to you such slaves of Ours who will be great warmongers, and they will barge into homes. This is a promise that will be fulfilled. Thereafter We will restore your authority over them, reinforce you with wealth and children, and greatly multiply your numbers."*

The details of this occasion have been mentioned in the books of history, while the Ahadīth are silent about this incident. These stories find their source from the Bani Isra'īl themselves and their authenticity cannot be verified.

WHO DESTROYED THE BANI ISRA'ĪL?

Four names have been quoted in reply to the above question. These are (1) Bukht Nasr (Nebuchadnezzar), (2) Jālūt (Goliath), (3) Khardūsh and (4) Sanjarīb. There also exists a difference with regard to who destroyed them the first time and who did so the second time.

After much deliberation, the author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that Bukht Nasr (Nebuchadnezzar) was the first to vanquish the Bani Isra'īl, and the second conqueror was Khardūsh. He writes that the second conquest was more decisive than the first, after which the Greeks established their dominion over the entire area once ruled by the Bani Isra'īl. Thereafter the Bani Isra'īl never regained their strength, but had only a stronghold in Baitul Muqaddas.

Allāh bestowed on them many favours, but they were ungrateful and continued to sin. As a result, Allāh caused the Roman emperor by the name of Taytūs bin Istaynūs to overpower them. He ravaged their city and caused them to flee, leaving it deserted. It was during the reign of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه that the Muslims entered Baitul Muqaddas and caused it to flourish once again.

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that Jālūt (Goliath) conquered the Bani Isra'īl the first time and he killed, imprisoned and disgraced them. Thereafter Allāh raised Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام to kill him, after which Allāh's promise was fulfilled that *"Thereafter We will restore your authority over them..."*

He says that after this they again caused strife and corruption and Allāh caused Bukht Nāsr to destroy them. Thereafter Allāh had mercy on them saying, *"The time is nigh that your Lord will have mercy on you. But if you repeat (your actions) We shall repeat (the way in which you were treated)."* However, they again fell into Allāh's disobedience and Allāh again punished them [this was all before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم]

Allāh says in Surah Anfāl, *"When your Lord declared that He will definitely raise against them (the Bani Isrā'īl) until the day of judgment (Qiyāmah) such people who will inflict tham? with severe punishment."* It is for this reason that the Jews always suffer at the hands of tyrants (like Hitler).

Allāh says, *"If you do good, you will be doing good for yourselves and if you do evil it will be to your detriment. When the second promise will come (We will permit your enemies) to distort your faces, to enter the Masjid as they entered the first time, and to destroy everything they are able to."* According to this verse, the Masjidul Aqsa was ravaged by these people and the Bani Isrā'īl were totally annihilated the second time around.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the Bani Isra'īl were annihilated the first time for disregarding the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. The reason for the second annihilation was that they rejected Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام.

The incidents of the previous nations like the Bani Isra'īl are a lesson for the Muslim Ummah. These people were destroyed because they flouted their religion's *(D'īn's)*, although they were believers. The incident of Spain and the destruction of Baghdad are described in the history books for all to read. Even the centuries old rule that the Muslims had over India was snatched away by the British and the Muslim rulers were all banished in Rangūn, where they died pitifully.

"We have made Hell a prison for the disbelievers." Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه has translated the verse to mean that Hell is a mat for the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, like in the verse, *"They will have the bed of Hell and a canopy atop them."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 41*]

إِنَّ هَٰذَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ يَهْدِى لِلَّتِى هِىَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٩﴾ وَأَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

(9) Surely this Qur'ān guides to a path that is straight and it the conveys glad tidings to the believers who do good deeds that theirs shall be a great reward... (10) And that We have prepared a painful punishment for those who do not believe in the Hereafter.

THE QUR'ĀN LEADS TO THE STRAIGHT PATH, GIVES GLAD TIDINGS TO THE BELIEVERS AND WARNS THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

Allāh says, *"Surely this Qur'ān guides to a path that is straight.'..."* There is no falsehood in the Qur'ān and it informs man how to please Allāh and acquire His favour.

The Qur'ān also *"conveys glad tidings to the believers who do good deeds that theirs shall be a great reward..."*

At the same time, the Qur'ān also warns *"that We have prepared a painful punishment for those who do not believe in the Hereafter."* Any person who

disbelieves in either Allāh, the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or in the Hereafter cannot be a believer *(Mu'min)*. He will therefore be unsuccessful in the Hereafter.

وَيَدْعُ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ بِٱلشَّرِّ دُعَآءَهُۥ بِٱلْخَيْرِ ۖ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ عَجُولًا ﴿١١﴾

(11) Man supplicates for evil just as he supplicates for good. Man was always hasty.

MAN PRAYS FOR EVIL AND IS EVER HASTY

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 4 p.166*) quotes Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه as saying that when a person becomes angry he curses himself and his family. When Allāh grants this curse, he becomes upset and grieved. Then he prays for good, which Allāh grants him. This is also the interpretation of this verse according to SayyidinaMujāhid رحمة الله عليه.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed that people should not curse themselves, their wealth and their families because their curse could coincide with a moment when du'ās are accepted. The curse will then be accepted. [*"Mishkāt" p. 194*]

Allāh then says, *"Man was always hasty."* Allāh says in another verse, *'Man has been created from haste (as his inherent quality)."* This haste that is found in man causes him much difficulty. In fact, the accidents that are caused are because of the same factor. Divorces and many other regrettable events occur for this reason. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that haste is from Shaytān and composure is from Allāh. [*"Mishkāt" p. 429*]

Things should be done with ease and they should not be hurried. Only those acts may be done hastily (i.e. without delay) that will benefit a person in the Hereafter. However, these should also not be spoilt by undue haste.

A person should always hurry the commencement of good deeds. Once he commences them, then he should ensure that they are performed well. The person should not hurry to complete them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the person who raises his head from a posture of Salāh before the Imām (because of haste) should beware lest Allāh transforms him into a donkey.

وَجَعَلْنَا ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ ءَايَتَيْنِ ۖ فَمَحَوْنَآ ءَايَةَ ٱلَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَآ ءَايَةَ ٱلنَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا۟ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا۟ عَدَدَ ٱلسِّنِينَ وَٱلْحِسَابَ ۚ وَكُلَّ شَىْءٍ فَصَّلْنَٰهُ تَفْصِيلًا

(12) We have made the night and the day two signs, then We obliterate the sign of the night and make the sign of the day visible so that you may seek Allāh's bounty and know the count of years and reckoning. We have explained everything in detail.

THE SIGNS OF NIGHT AND DAY

Man should ponder over the timeouts alternation of the day and the night and realise Allāh's power from this. Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"It is Him Who has appointed the night and the day in succession for the one who intends to take heed or intends to be grateful."* [*Surah* 25, *verse* 62]

The varying lengths of the day and night are all because of Allāh's perfect system of planning. Allāh says, *"We obliterate the sign of the night (at daybreak) and make the sign of the day visible so that you may seek Allāh's bounty..."* This refers to working and earning one's livelihood. Allāh has mentioned in several Surahs that He has made the night a period of rest and recuperation after the day's work. One such verse is verse 73 of Surah Qasas (*Surah 28*) where Allāh says, *"Because of His mercy, He has created the day and the night for you so that you may find peace therein, seek from His bounty, and express your gratitude to Him."*

Another reason for this alternation is so that man can *"know the count of years and reckoning."* Dates, times and appointments are recorded by means of the change of the days. Many acts of religion *(D'īn)* are also related to time and date and can be carried out only with the knowledge of the calendar. If there were only day or only night these things will not be possible and chaos will reign.

وَكُلَّ إِنسَٰنٍ أَلْزَمْنَٰهُ طَٰٓئِرَهُۥ فِى عُنُقِهِۦ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ كِتَٰبًا يَلْقَىٰهُ مَنشُورًا
﴿١٣﴾ ٱقْرَأْ كِتَٰبَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾ مَّنِ ٱهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِى
لِنَفْسِهِۦ ۖ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ
نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾

(13) We shall cast every person's record of deeds upon his neck. On the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) We shall take out for him a book that he will see opened before him. (14) "Read your book. Today you are a sufficient witness against yourself." (15) Whoever is rightly guided, he has been guided for his own benefit, and whosoever is astray has gone astray only to his own detriment. No soul shall bear the burden of another. We shall never punish (any nation) until We send a messenger.

EVERY SOUL WILL RECEIVE ITS RECORD OF DEEDS

The angels record every person's deeds and he will receive this record of deeds as a written book on the Day of Judgement. The successful ones will receive their records in their right hands, while the others will receive theirs in their left hands behind their backs. None shall be able to escape this presentation. Allāh refers to this when Allāh says, *"We shall cast every person 's record of deeds upon his neck."* Some commentators have translated this verse to mean that the record of their action will be made as a noose around their necks.

The verse uses the word "Tā'ir" for the record of deeds. This word literally means a "bird." Commentators say that the Arabs used to shake a branch of a

tree before doing anything. Then they would observe whether the, bird upon the branch flew to the right or to the left. If it flew to the right, they would carry out the action they intended and if it flew to the left they would refrain. This was called taking omens. Since they considered the birds to be the factor that determined their future, Allāh uses the same word for their records of deeds since these will determine their destiny in the Hereafter.

"On the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) We shall take out for him a book that he will see opened before him." He will then be instructed, *"Read your book. Today you are a sufficient witness against yourself"* In this world it is easy to be a witness over one's self and gradually correct one's deeds. However, in the Hereafter it will be impossible. It has been said that a person should take reckoning of himself in this world before he is reckoned in the Hereafter.

The person whose record will be good will call to others saying, *"Come and read my record! I was certain that my reckoning would take place."* On the other hand, the person whose record will be unfavourable will say, *"O dear! If only I had not been given my record and had not known my reckoning!"* [*Surah Hāqa (69), verses* 25, 26]

Allāh continues to say, *"Whoever is rightly guided, he has been guided for his own benefit, and whosoever is astray has gone astray only to his own detriment (for he will suffer in Hell). No soul shall bear the burden of another."* No person will suffer for the sin of another although some make the claim in this world that they will bear the brunt of another's sin.

The question is raised that certain verses of the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth state that those who prompt others to perpetrate evil will also be accountable for the sins of those who followed them. How do these verses and Ahadīth correlate with the above verse?

The reply is that those who followed will receive the punishment for their sins separately, while those who misled them will suffer for the sin of misleading them in addition to their personal sins.

"We shall never punish (any nation) until We send a messenger." None can object to Allāh's punishment because it comes to people only after they refute the truth brought to them by the Prophets عليهم السلام, Allāh's divine scriptures and His various signs. Allāh says in Surah Fātir, "A *warner passed in every nation."* [*Surah* 35, *verse 24*]

After the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم there will be no Prophets عليهم السلام, but the message of Islām has already reached every person on earth. Therefore, none can say that the message has not reached him. The Qur'ān has been translated into all the major languages and is available to all.

The person who perhaps lives in a remote mountain or jungle and has not come into contact with any human, will be obliged to accept the concept of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* by witnessing Allāh's signs. This will save him from Hell even though he does not know of any Prophet.

وَإِذَآ أَرَدْنَآ أَن نُّهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا۟ فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا ٱلْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَٰهَا تَدْمِيرًا

(16) When We intend to destroy any town, We command those of them who lead a life of luxury. They then sin in the town, because of which Our decree becomes justified against them and We completely annihilate them. (17) How many generations have We not destroyed after Nūh? Your Lord suffices as the Knower and Seer of the sins of His slaves.

TOWNS ARE DESTROYED WHEN THE LEADERS AND WEALTHY MEMBERS OF SOCIETIES SIN

When the affluent and influential people of a place refuse to submit to Allāh's commands, they influence the rest of the people to follow suit. Thereafter, the time is not long when Allāh causes them all to suffer collectively in punishment. The leaders are mentioned specifically because they are more prone to disobedience because of their wealth and being accustomed to leading a life of luxury. When they refuse to accept something, they make sure that others do not accept it as well.

The public are also responsible for their own actions and will be destroyed because of their own misdeeds and not on account of the sins of the rich and the leaders.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"How many generations have We not destroyed after Nūh?"* They were all destroyed because of their disobedience. None has to inform Allāh of what people do because, *"Your Lord suffices as the Knower and Seer of the sins of His slaves."*

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُۥ فِيهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَن نُّرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَىٰهَا مَذْمُومًا مَّدْحُورًا (18) وَمَنْ أَرَادَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا (19) كُلًّا نُّمِدُّ هَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَهَـٰٓؤُلَآءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُورًا (20) ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَلْـَٔاخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَـٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا (21) لَّا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَـٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُومًا مَّخْذُولًا (22)

(18) Whoever desires the pleasures of this world, We shall grant whatever We will for whomsoever We will in this very world, and then We will appoint Hell for him. He will enter it despicably and rejected. (19) And whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts himself for it as he ought to and is a believer, then such are the people whose deeds will be appreciated. (20) We grant to all from the grace of your Lord, to these and to those. The grace of your Lord is not restricted. (21)

See how We have favoured some over others. Without doubt the Hereafter is great in terms of ranks and great in terms of favours. (22) Do not ascribe partners to Allāh, for then you will sit reproached and without help.

THOSE WHO SEEK THE WORLD WILL RECEIVE A SMALL PORTION OF IT AND HELL IN THE HEREAFTER, WHILE THE DEEDS OF THE BELIEVERS WILL BE VALUED GREATLY

Allāh begins by describing the person who seeks this world through his deeds. Allāh says, *"Whoever desires the pleasures of this world, We shall grant whatever We will for whomsoever We will in this very world..."* Every seeker of this world will not receive its pleasures, nor will any of them receive all of it. In their intoxication for this world, they are also blind to belief *(Imān)*. Therefore Allāh says that *"We will appoint Hell for him. He will enter it despicably and rejected."*

Allāh says in Surah Shura, *"Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We shall increase its harvest for him. And We shall grant a part of this world's harvest to the one who desires it; and he will have no share in the Hereafter."* [*Surah 42, verse 20*]

Thereafter Allāh cites the converse when He says, *"And whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts himself for it as he ought to and is a believer, then such are the people whose deeds will be appreciated."* This verse mentions three conditions for the acceptance of one's deeds. The first is that the person's intention is to acquire the Hereafter. Secondly, his efforts should be carried out in the proper manner i.e. according to the dictates of the Shari'ah. The third condition is that he be a believer *(Mu'min)*. If he is not a believer *(Mu'min)*, all his efforts will be futile irrespective of how sincere and laborious they may be. The actions of people who carry out their good deeds in the proper manner will be well rewarded by at least ten-fold.

One should never think that a person is accepted by Allāh merely because he has wealth. Allāh grants wealth to all people, be they good or bad. Therefore Allāh says, *"We grant to all from the grace of your Lord, to these and to those. The grace of your Lord is not restricted."*

"See how We have favoured some over others." The believers *(Mu'minīn)* and the disbelievers *(kuffār)* all vary in this regard and many disbelievers *(kuffār)* may be wealthier than many believer *(Mu'min)*. However, the criterion for success is not this world but the Hereafter. For this reason Allāh says, *"Without doubt the Hereafter is great in terms of ranks and great in terms of favours."*

Thereafter Allāh commands, *"Do not ascribe partners to Allāh, for then you will sit reproached and without help."* The polytheists *(Mushrik)* will regret his plight in the Hereafter, where there shall be none to assist him.

۞ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ وَبِٱلْوَٰلِدَيْنِ إِحْسَٰنًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ ٱلْكِبَرَ
أَحَدُهُمَآ أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَآ أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾
وَٱخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ ٱلذُّلِّ مِنَ ٱلرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِى صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

(23) Your Lord has commanded that you worship only Him and that you treat your parents kindly. If any one of the two, or both of them reaches old age by you, then do not even tell them "ūf!" and do not rebuke them. Speak to them gently. (24) Lower for them the wings of humility out of compassion and say, "O my Lord! Show mercy to them as they have raised me (mercifully) when I was young." (25) Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts. If you are righteous then surely He is Most Forgiving unto those who turn to Him.

THE COMMANDMENT TO TREAT PARENTS KINDLY AND WITH COMPASSION

(1) "Your Lord has commanded that you worship only Him..." All the Prophets عليهم السلام brought this same message to their nations, and it is the hallmark of all the divine scriptures.

(2) The second command issued in these verses is that one treats one's parents kindly. Allāh commands that they be treated well because He has made them the means whereby man has been blessed with the bounty of life. The parents also have to endure great difficulties and hardships when raising their children.

Surah Baqarah, Surah Ān'ām and the above verse of Surah Bani Isra'īl all ordain that parents should be treated kindly. They should be obeyed, revered and served to the best of one's ability. Of course, none may be obeyed when they instruct an act that entails disobedience to Allāh.

(3) "If any one of the two, or both of them reaches old age by you, then do not even tell them 'ūf!" The purpose of this verse is that no word should be uttered to them that will reduce their respect or that will cause them grief. This includes using words like "Agh!" or any other words of this sort that express frustration or resentment,

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه says that if there was any word inferior than the word "Ūf!" Allāh would have used it. The parents have to be treated well at all times. The reason for specifically mentioning kind treatment in old age is that they tend to become irritable and ill-tempered as they grow old. They may also become ill and their children will have to serve them and tend to them. The child has to exercise extreme patience during such times and not mutter a word in protest.

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the child should not even say, "ūf!" when he has to wash the soiled clothes of his aged parents because they never said so when washing the child's soiled clothing as an infant. [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

(4) "...and do not rebuke them." If one cannot say "ūf!" to his parents then neither can he rebuke them in any way.

(5) "Speak to them gently." They should be addressed with utmost respect. Sayyidina Ṣa'īd bin Musayyab رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the parents should be addressed just as a slave addresses an extremely harsh and uncompromising master.

Sayyidina Zuhayr bin Muhammad رحمة الله عليه stated that this verse means that when the parents call, the child should respond by saying, "I am present and prepared to do your bidding." [*"Durrul Manthūr' v. 4 p. 171*]

(6) "Lower for them the wings of humility out of compassion..." Explaining this verse, Sayyidina Urwa رضى الله عنه said that the child should behave in such a manner towards the parents that they are able to do as they please. One's presence should not present a hindrance to one's parents.

Sayyidina Atā bin Abi Rabāh رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that a child should not move his hands up and down when addressing his parents. Sayyidina Zuhayr bin Muhammad رحمة الله عليه explains the verse to mean that even if the parents swear and scold the child, he should merely say, "May Allāh have mercy on you." [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

(7) "...and say, 'O my Lord! Show mercy to them as they have raised me when I was young."' Once the parents cared for their children who were helpless and ignorant. After fifty or sixty years the tables turn and now the parents require this care and attention. The children should now recall the past and spend wholeheartedly on their parents. Then they should make the above du'ā (*supplication*) for their parents, invoking Allāh's mercy upon them.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رضى الله عنه reports (*v. 3 p.35*) that a person once carried his mother on his back and performed Tawāf with her. He then asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether he had fulfilled her rights by doing this. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "You have not even repaid her one breath."

"Your Lord knows best what is in your hearts. If you are righteous then surely He is Most Forgiving unto those who turn to Him." Explaining this verse, Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه says that if any child feels that he has not fulfilled the rights of his parents, he should sincerely repent. Allāh will forgive him.

The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that the reverence for parents should not be confined only to apparent actions. They should be revered from within the heart. Allāh is well aware of the hearts of people. However, Allāh will be forgiving to those who sincerely turn to Him in repentance.

THE VIRTUE OF TREATING PARENTS KINDLY

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that he asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم which act was most liked by Allāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "To perform Salāh on time." He then asked what act was most liked after this. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Kind treatment of parents."

When he again asked what deed followed in merit, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Jihād in Allāh's way." [*"Mishkāt" p. 58*]

THE PARENTS ARE A MEANS OF ENTERING HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* OR HELL

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضى الله عنه reports that someone asked, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! What rights of the parents are due to them from their children?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "They are both your Heaven *(Jannah)* or your Hell." [*"Mishkāt" p. 421*]

If the parents are treated well and cared for, their children will be admitted into Heaven *(Jannah)*. However, if the children do not fulfil the rights of their parents, these children will enter Hell.

ALLĀH'S PLEASURE IS IN THE PLEASURE OF THE PARENTS

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, 'Allāh's pleasure is in the pleasure of the parents and Allāh's displeasure lies in the displeasure of the parents." [*"Mishkāt" p. 419*]

Since Allāh has ordered that the parents be pleased, He will be displeased if they are displeased. This will apply only when they are displeased because of a legitimate reason. If they are displeased because the child did not obey a command of theirs that was against the Shári'ah, the child should not be concerned because pleasing Allāh is of greater importance.

THE FATHER IS THE BEST DOOR TO HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "The father is the best door to Heaven *(Jannah)*. Now (by obeying him) you may protect this door, or (by disobeying him) you may destroy the door." ["Mishkāt" p. 420]

THE PRAYER OF A FATHER IS CERTAINLY ACCEPTED

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is no doubt about the fact that the du'ās of three people are accepted. (1) The father's supplication *(du'ā)* for his children. (2) The du'ā of a traveller. (3) The du'ā of an oppressed person." [*"Mishkāt" p. 195*]

Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه has written that if the father's supplication *(du'ā)* for the children is readily accepted, then the mother's supplication *(du'ā)* must also be more readily accepted. Children should therefore ensure that they always please their parents so that the parents keep praying for them. They should never cause hurt to them because, just as their supplication's *(du'ā's)* are accepted in the child's favour, their supplication's *(du'ā's)* against the child (their curses) are also readily accepted. Their curses will bring destruction in both worlds.

SOME INCIDENTS PERTAINING TO THE TREATMENT OF PARENTS

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها narrates that a person once came to the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with an old man. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him who the old man was, he replied that the old man was his father. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Always respect and honour him. Never walk in front of him, nor sit before he does. Never call him by his name and never swear him." [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p.171*]

This hadith explains some finer points by which respect can be shown to parents. The last point mentioned by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم means that a person should never swear another person's father. By doing this, the person will retaliate by swearing the first person's father as well. In this way, the person becomes the cause for the father to be sworn at. This is meant by not swearing one's father because no sane person will actually swear his father directly.

A person may walk in front of his father if the situation requires him to do so e.g. if he is leading his blind or aged father.

A PERSON'S LIFE SPAN AND SUSTENANCE ARE INCREASED BY TREATING HIS PARENTS WELL

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Whoever desires that his lifespan be lengthened and that his sustenance be increased should treat his parents well and maintain good relations with his relatives."* [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 173*].

There are many people who spend generously on their friends and wives, yet are niggardly towards their parents. These people will be deprived of rewards in the Hereafter and, in this world, they will also be depriving themselves of a longer life and increased provisions.

THE REWARD FOR EARNING FOR ONE'S PARENTS

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that a thin person once passed by a gathering of the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم. They said, "If only this body was used (i.e. grew thin) in Allāh's path." Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "He is possibly exerting himself to earn for his aged parents. If this is the case, then he is also in Allāh's path. If he is exerting himself to earn for his young children, then he is also in Allāh's path. If he is exerting himself to earn for himself so that he is independent from people (i.e. he does not have to beg from others), then he is also in Allāh's path." [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 170*]

SERVING THE PARENTS IS BETTER THAN NAFL JIHĀD

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that a person once requested permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to participate in Jihād. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether his parents were alive. When he replied in the affirmative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to rather apply himself to their service.

According to another narration, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Go and treat them well." [*"Mishkāt" p. 331*]

Sayyidina Mu'āwiya bin Jāhma رضى الله عنه narrates that his father Jāhma رضى الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "I intend to participate in Jihād. I

have come to consult you?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him whether his mother was alive, to which he replied in the affirmative. Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Engage in her service, for verily Heaven *(Jannah)* lies beneath the feet of the mother." [*"Mishkāt" p. 431*]

When Jihād is not compulsory and there is none to care for one's parents, it is best to remain behind to tend to them.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه reports that a person migrated from Yemen and came in the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "You have migrated, now Jihād remains. Have you any close relatives still in Yemen?" He replied that his parents were still there. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked, "Have your parents permitted you?" When he replied in the negative, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Then go back, take leave from them. If they permit you, you may participate in Jihād, otherwise remain in their attendance." [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p.175*]

ADVICE TO THE PERSON WHO LEFT HIS PARENTS WEEPING TO PLEDGE HIS ALLEGIANCE

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that a person came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "I have come to pledge my allegiance to you that I will migrate. However, I have left my parents weeping over my departure." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Return to them and make them laugh just as you had made them cry." [*Mustadrak of Hākimi v. 4 p.153*]

These Ahadīth show the importance of pleasing the parents. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised these Sahabah رضى الله عنه to please their parents even though they had all left with noble intentions. It is also learnt that causing them to be happy earns great rewards.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه has mentioned that it is a major sin to cause the parents to weep because of one's disobedience. [*Adabul Mufrid*]

Sayyidina Uwais Qarni رحمة الله عليه accepted Islām during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but could not become a companion of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he had to care for his mother in Yemen. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم knew about him but did not rebuke his inability to come to Madinah. Rather, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم appreciated this deed of his and gave him the title of "Sayyidut Tābi'īn" ("The Leader of the Tābi'īn"). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even told the Sahabah رضى الله عنه to ask Sayyidina Uwais رحمة الله عليه to make prayer (du'ā) for them.

Muslim reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Uwais Qarni has a mother whom he treats very well. If Uwais has to swear by Allāh, Allāh will most certainly fulfil his oath."

SERVICE TO ONE'S PARENTS HOLDS NO LESS REWARD THAN NAFL HAJJ AND UMRAH

Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه narrates that a person told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he desired to participate in Jihād but could not do so (perhaps he was ill or suffered some handicap). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him

whether any of his parents were alive. He replied that his mother was. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told him, "Then you fear Allāh with regard to your mother (i.e. by serving her). When you do this, you will be one who has performed Hajj, Umrah and Jihād. Now fear Allāh whenever your mother calls you (i.e. obey her) and treat her well." [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p.173*]

The call of one's parents should be heeded immediately. If the parents call for help because of some difficulty and there is none other to respond to their plea, it is compulsory for the child even to terminate his obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh immediately to assist. If they are calling for another reason that does not require immediate attention and they are unaware that the child is engaged in Salāh, then it will be compulsory to terminate one's sunnah or nafl Salāh. The Fardh Salāh should not be terminated immediately, but completed first. However, if they know that the child is performing Salāh and merely call for no legitimate reason, then the child will not be sinful for not responding.

THE PUNISHMENT FOR CAUSING GRIEF TO PARENTS WILL BE SUFFERED IN THIS VERY WORLD

Sayyidina Abu Bakrah رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "All sins are such that Allāh may forgive them if He wills. However, the sin of causing grief to one's parents is such that the punishment for it will be suffered before death in this very world." [*"Mishkāt" p. 412*]

DISOBEYING ONE'S PARENTS IS ONE OF THE VERY MAJOR SINS

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The very major sins are (1) ascribing partners to Allāh, (2) disobedience to parents, (3) murder and (4) taking false oaths." [*"Mishkāt" p. 17*]

This hadith uses the word "Uqūqul Wālidain" as the second greatest sin. The meaning of this word is very extensive and includes disobedience to parents as well as causing grief and trouble to them, either by word or by deed. As was mentioned, the second most loved action to Allāh is kindness to parents. Conversely, the second greatest major sin is to cause them distress and grief.

THE PERSON WHOSE PARENTS DO NOT ADMIT HIM INTO HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* IS MOST DISGRACED

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said, "He is disgraced! He is disgraced! He is disgraced!" When the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم enquired to whom he was referring to, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person who finds one or both of his parents in old age and still does not enter Heaven *(Jannah)* (by serving them)." [*"Mishkāt" p. 418*]

By serving one's parents in their old age, a person can secure forgiveness for all his past sins. However, if he is still negligent towards them in their old age, he will only be speeding up his admission into Hell. He is most disgraced on the tongue of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

CASTING ANGRY LOOKS AT ONE'S PARENTS IS ALSO FORBIDDEN

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who casts angry looks at his parents has not treated them well. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p . 171*]

When someone asked Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه what was the definition of "Uqūqul Wālidain" he replied, "Depriving them (of wealth and service), not associating with them and casting angry looks at them." [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

Sayyidina Urwa رضی الله عنه say that when a person's parents displeases him (by telling him something nasty), then he should not look at them adversely because this is the first sign of anger. [*"Durrul Manthūr"*]

It is learnt from this that even a person's limbs and actions should not convey any disrespect to his parents.

SWEARING ONE'S PARENTS IS A MAJOR SIN

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Swearing one's parents is a major sin." Astonished, the Sahābah رضی الله عنهم asked, "How can anyone swear his parents?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "When a person swears the father of another, he retaliates by swearing the first person's father. Similarly, when a person swears the mother of another, he retaliates by swearing the first person's mother." [*"Mishkāt" p.419*]

The person will therefore be guilty of a major sin because he has caused his parents to be sworn at. If this is the case of one who is a cause of his parents being sworn at, one can well imagine the immense gravity of the sin for directly swearing them! The Sahābah رضی الله عنهم expressed surprise that any person could swear his parents because none in their time was foolish enough to do so. How tragic then is the condition of people in today's times who flagrantly swear and curse their parents!

BY PRAYING AND SEEKING FORGIVENESS FOR ONE'S PARENTS, A CHILD CAN BE RECORDED AMONG THE OBEDIENT CHILDREN

Sayyidina Anas رضی الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that it is possible for the person who disobeyed and troubled his parents (or one of them) to be recorded as an obedient child after their demise if he makes prayer (du'ā) for them and seeks forgiveness from Allāh on their behalf. [*"Mishkāt" p. 421*]

THE RANKS OF PARENTS IN THE HEREAFTER MAY BE RAISED BY PRAYING FOR THEIR FORGIVENESS

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily Allāh can elevate the ranks of His pious slaves in Heaven (*Jannah*). They will ask, 'O Lord! How have I attained these rank'?' Allāh will tell them that it is because of the prayers of their children who prayed for their forgiveness." [*"Mishkāt" p. 205*]

People should always pray for their deceased parents, at least after every

obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh.

وَءَاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّ ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ
كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ ۖ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِمَّا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ٱبْتِغَآءَ
رَحْمَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوهَا فَقُل لَّهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُورًا ﴿٢٨﴾ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ
وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ ٱلْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا ﴿٢٩﴾ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ ٱلرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ
وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

(26) Give the relative his right, as well as the poor and the traveller. And do not be excessively extravagant. (27) Without doubt, the extravagant ones are the brothers of the Devils (Shayātīn). And Devil (Shaytān) was ever ungrateful to his Lord. (28) Should you evade them seeking the mercy of your Lord that you anticipate, then speak to them with gentle words. (29) Do not keep your hand tied to your neck, nor spread it wide open, otherwise you will sit reproached and empty handed. (30) Verily your Lord increases the provisions of whomsoever He wills and decreases. Indeed He is Informed and Watching over His slaves.

SPENDING ON RELATIVES, THE DESTITUTE AND TRAVELLERS AND PROHIBITING EXTRAVAGANCE

While the previous verses contained encouragement for spending on one's parents, the above verses speak of spending on others as well. Allāh says, *"Give the relative his right, as well as the poor and the traveller."* The details about when spending on relatives is compulsory and when it is not are found in the books of jurisprudence. This and other laws pertaining to spending on the poor and the travellers have been discussed in the commentary of verse 177 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah 2*).

Allāh then says, *"And do not be excessively extravagant."* While the Shari'ah encourages generosity, it severely criticises overspending and wastage of wealth, especially when this is done in activities that are against the Shari'ah. Many people have the habit of being wasteful and extravagant; as a result they are forced to resort to Harām avenues to sustain their habits.

In another verse Allāh says, *"do not be wasteful. Indeed, He does not like those who are wasteful."* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 31*]

Expressing the evil of such people Allāh says, *"Without doubt, the extravagant ones are the brothers of Shaytān."* This is so because they pander to Devils *(Shayātīn's)* bidding and spend as he dictates to them.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه quotes (*v. 3 p.36*) Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه as saying that extravagance refers to spending in avenues that oppose the truth. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that if a person spends all his wealth on promoting the truth, it will not be extravagance. However, spending even a handful on

falsehood will be extravagance and wastage.

"And Devil (Shaytān) was ever ungrateful to his Lord." Those who are extravagant are also ungrateful for Allāh's bounty of wealth. A person should be moderate in his spending. He should spend on the obligatory *(Fardh)* and compulsory *(Wājib)* activities, as well give optional charity. Most foolish is the person who spends what Allāh gave him in a way that incurs Allāh's wrath!

"Should you evade them (the needy) seeking the mercy of your Lord that you anticipate, then speak to them with gentle words." When a person really cannot provide any assistance to a relative, the poor or a traveller (or anyone else), then he should not be harsh with them if they are importunate. He should speak to them kindly and make them understand.

It has been recorded that sometimes the poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه used to ask the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for something they needed. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not have anything to offer them, he would shrink away from them in embarrassment. It was for this reason that Allāh revealed the above verse.

"Do not keep your hand tied to your neck, nor spread it wide open, otherwise you will sit reproached and empty handed." This verse teaches the invaluable lesson of moderation. One should neither be so miserly that one does not give any charity, neither should one give so much that all one's resources are depleted. Then people will rebuke one saying that one cares for others and not for oneself.

Certain commentators say that the word *"reproached"* is related to the first instance of being niggardly i.e. in that case people will reproach him for his stinginess. The second word, they say *("empty handed")* is related to the situation where he spends everything on others.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said that moderation in spending is half of livelihood management. [*"Mishkāt" p. 430*]

This hadith tells us that moderation in one's expenditure will solve half of one's financial problems. Being too stingy or being too extravagant has led to the downfall of many individuals and nations. It is for this reason the entire world is trapped in the vicious cycle of usury.

Note: The injunction of not spending all one's wealth in a good cause applies to those who may suffer regret and difficulty later on. It does not apply to those who have perfect trust in Allāh. They may spend all their wealth in Allāh's way. The incident of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه is famous when he spent all his wealth for the battle of Tabūk. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him what he had left for his family, he replied, "I have left Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for them." [*"Mishkāt" p. 556*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم accepted this from him. There are numerous other similar incidents of the generosity of pious people in Islāmic history.

"Verily your Lord increases the provisions of whomsoever He wills and decreases. Indeed He is Informed and Watching over His slaves." Allāh reserves the right to

distribute sustenance to His creation as He pleases. He grants to whom He pleases according to His supreme knowledge and wisdom. Man, on the other hand has to adopt moderation in his spending.

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا۟ أَوْلَٰدَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَٰقٍ ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْـًٔا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ ٱلزِّنَىٰٓ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَٰحِشَةً وَسَآءَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ ٱلنَّفْسَ ٱلَّتِى حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَن قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا فَلَا يُسْرِف فِّى ٱلْقَتْلِ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مَنصُورًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا۟ مَالَ ٱلْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا۟ بِٱلْعَهْدِ ۖ إِنَّ ٱلْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿٣٤﴾ وَأَوْفُوا۟ ٱلْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا۟ بِٱلْقِسْطَاسِ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٣٥﴾

(31) Do not kill your children out of fear of poverty. We shall provide for them and for you. Slaying them is indeed a grave sin. (32) And do not even approach near fornication. It is truly an indecent act and the worst of ways. (33) And do not kill a soul that Allāh has forbidden except with a warrant. Whoever is killed unjustly, then verily We have granted authority to his heir, so let him not transgress in execution. Indeed He shall be assisted. (34) And approach the wealth of the orphan only in a manner that is best until he comes of age. And fulfil the pledge. Certainly, questioning shall take place with regard to pledges. (35) Measure in full when you measure and weigh with proper scales. This is best and better in the outcome.

DO NOT KILL YOUR CHILDREN, DO NOT APPROACH ADULTERY, DO NOT MURDER AND DO NOT USURP THE WEALTH OF ORPHANS

The above verses contain many commands and prohibitions. Allāh says, *"Do not kill your children out of fear of* poverty." The early Arabs, as well as many people nowadays, think that they will not be able to provide for children and that if they do, then they will suffer poverty. Allāh prohibits this vile act in this verse and in another similar verse of Surah Ān'ām. Allāh dispels this practice by saying, *"Slaying them is indeed a grave sin."*

Today the disbelievers *(kuffār)* have also instilled this notion into Muslims. The say that if the human race continues to grow at the present rate, the explosive population will deplete the earth's resources and there will not be enough food for everyone. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* squander millions to propagate this fallacy and even more millions to institute programmes of birth control. The astonishing factor is that the Muslim statesmen accept their theory instead of looking into the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth. Allāh makes it clear that *"We shall provide for them and for you."*

However, all their plans to control the birth rate cannot succeed against the

decree of Allāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said. "Every soul decreed to be born until judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will be born."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said, "A child is not born from every sperm, and when Allāh intends to create something, none can stop Him." [*"Mishkāt" p. 275*]

It is commonly observed that children are born despite the preventive measures taken by people. It is surprising that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are concerned with the life of those that are still unborn but have no concern for those who are living presently. Daily they are killing people and spending billions on more sophisticated weapons that are able to kill even more people.

"And do not even approach near fornication. It is truly an indecent act and the worst of ways." Fornication is such a vile act that no religion *(D'īn)* condones it.

However, many who claim to follow Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام in countries like Europe, America and Australia have lost all hold of their modesty and fornication has become the order of the day. These people believe that their priests will forgive them on Sundays and therefore continue their sinful ways unabated.

Even more unfortunate is the plight of those Muslims who live with these people. Besides committing adultery, they even permit their own wives to engage in this sinful activity.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went for ascension *(Mi'rāj)*, he saw that the skins of certain people were being cut by scissors of fire. When he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام who these people were, the reply was that they were the people who beautified themselves for fornication. He then passed by a pit that emitted a terribly foul odour. Heinous screams came from there. When he asked Jibr'īl عليه السلام who these people were, the reply was that these were the women who adorned themselves for adultery and committed those acts that were Harām for them. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.511*]

To prevent such vile occurrences, the Shari'ah has also banned looking at strange women. Islām tells us that even the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the hands and the feet all can commit adultery. The penal code of Islām dictates that fornicating unmarried people will be lashed and the married ones will be stoned to death. All these serve to curb the incidence of fornication.

Sayyidina Amr bin Al Ās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when fornication is widespread in a nation, they will be afflicted by droughts and when bribery becomes common among them, they will suffer great fear.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه report that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When fornication and usury become prevalent in any nation (or any town, according to another narration), then these people will themselves cause Allāh's punishment to descend on them." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.278*]

When adultery occurs, illegitimate children abound. Then there are no records of family lineage and relationships. None knows who their relatives are

so that they may maintain relations with them. People then become just like animals and even take pride in being illegitimate, as can be seen in many Western countries.

Sayyidah Maymūna رضى الله عنها narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "My Ummah will remain in good stead until illegitimate children become prevalent among them. When this happens, then Allāh will shortly inflict them with a widespread punishment." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.277*]

Bukhari reports a hadith from Sayyidina Samura bin Jundub رضى الله عنه in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recounts a dream of his (the dreams of the Prophets عليهم السلام are true). He mentions that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saw a pit that resembled an oven. In this oven he saw many naked men and women. Below them, a raging fire burnt. Whenever the flames rose, these people screamed and pleaded for help. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his companions [*Jibr'īl* عليه السلام *and Mika'īl* عليه السلام] who these people were, they informed him that these were the adulterers. [*Bukhari p.1044 and "Mishkāt" p. 395*]

Once a person habitually engages in fornication, he cannot forsake it even in his old age. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will not speak to three people on the Day of Judgement. Allāh will not also look at them with mercy, nor purify them. These will be (1) an old man who fornicates, (2) a king who lies and (3) a proud beggar.

Another hadith states that the old man who fornicates will be among those people who will not enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. A third narration reports that he will be of those whom Allāh loathes. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.275*]

Sayyidina Abu Qatādah رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the day of Judgement, Allāh will assign a serpent to the person who shares a bed with a woman whose husband is not at home. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.279*]

This hadith mentions a woman whose husband is not at home because this is normally the occasion when adultery takes place. It does not mean that it will be permissible for a person to cohabit with a woman whose husband is a cuckold and consents to the act in his presence.

Islām advocates chastity and purity. It for this reason that there is no room in Islām for nudity, promiscuity and dancing. However, the licentiousness and immorality of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* has led to them to sodomy, homosexuality and all other despicable acts which have caused them to suffer from the worst diseases.

One of the reasons for punishment mentioned in the hadith is, *"When a man will gratify himself with another man and woman with another woman."* [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p.267*]

Muslims should not slavishly follow the antics of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Allāh wishes to forgive you and those who follow their desires only wish that you fall into gross deviation."* [*Surah 4, verse 27*]

The preposterous statement has been made by some adulterous women that their bodies are their own and they can therefore do as they please with it. This

claim is absolutely fallacious and amounts to rejection of the Qur'ān. People fail to understand that Allāh is the Creator and Master of man. He decides what his slaves will do since they (and their bodies) belong to Him.

Many Muslim statesmen belong to such governments which forbid rape but allow adultery. They are active in passing such laws, thereby jeopardising their Imān. It is also foolish that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* frown upon polygamy, yet they condone a man having several mistresses and lovers.

In conclusion, the following hadith is presented. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ reports that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم once addressed immigrants *(Muhajirīn)* warning them against five things which have serious repercussions. He prayed that they should never practise them. These five things are:

1. *When flagrant immodesty predominates, then pestilence will spread and people will be afflicted with such diseases that were never heard of by their forebears.*

2. *Those people who cheat in weight and measure will be punished with droughts hard labour and the oppression of tyrannical rulers.*

3. *Those who do not pay their Zakāh will be deprived of rain. Were it not for the animals, they would not receive a single drop of rain.*

4. *Those who breach the pledge of Allāh and His Prophet* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *will be vanquished by their enemy, who will usurp their wealth.*

5. *When the leaders of a nation do not pass judgement by the Qur'ān and do not adopt the ways that Allāh has revealed Allāh will cause such friction between them that will lead to feuds and battles. [Ibn Majah p.112]*

"And do not kill a soul that Allāh has forbidden except with a warrant." A person may be killed only for a reason that is legitimate in the Shari'ah. The details of this were discussed in verses 178 and 179 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah* 2), in verses 92 to 94 of Surah Nisā (*Surah* 4) and in verse 45 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah* 5).

"Whoever is killed unjustly, then verily We have granted authority to his heir, so let him not transgress in execution." The heirs of the murdered person should retaliate in accordance to the laws of the Shari'ah and cannot do more than this.

"Indeed He shall be assisted." If he carries out the law of Shari'ah properly, then the Shari'ah and the Muslim government will facilitate the process of retaliation. However, if he transgresses the laws, then the Shari'ah and the Muslim court will have to punish him in turn.

The fourth injunction mentioned in the above verses is, *"And approach the wealth of the orphan only in a manner that is best until he comes of age."* The details of this have passed in the commentary of the second verse of Surah Nisā (*Surah* 4).

Fifthly, Allāh says, *"And fulfil the pledge. Certainly, questioning shall take place with regard to pledges."* This verse warns people to be conscious of the pledges and promises that they make. Reference to this has been made in various verse of

the Qur'ān. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Those who fulfill their promises when making them..."* Allāh says in the first verse of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah 5*), *"O you who believe, fulfill your pledges."* Allāh also says in Surah Nahl, *"Fulfil Allāh's pledge when you have made the pledge."*

The sixth command given by Allāh is, *'Measure in full when you measure and weigh with proper scales."* The details of this have been given in verse 152 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*) and in the commentary of verses 85 to 93 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

Allāh then concludes by saying, *"This is best and better in the outcome."*

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا ﴿36﴾ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ ٱلْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿37﴾ كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ﴿38﴾

(36) And do not pursue what you have no knowledge about. Indeed questioning shall take place with regard to the ears, the eyes and the hearts. (37) And do not walk haughtily on earth. You can certainly not cleave the earth, nor can you reach the mountains in height. (38) The evil of all of these is detestable to your Lord.

DO NOT PURSUE UNCERTAIN MATTERS AND DO NOT WALK WITH PRIDE

Allāh says, *"And do not pursue what you have no knowledge about."* This verse includes all such matters which disgrace and dishonours people. The verse prohibits a person from relating any news that is uncertain and unverified. By adhering to this advice, people will not be slandered. Speculation should not be reported to others, since these things cause hatred and enmity between people.

Allāh says in Surah Hujurāt, *"Verily, some assumptions are a sin."* One should abstain from backbiting even though the report may be truthful.

"Indeed questioning shall take place with regard to the ears, the eyes and the hearts." Allāh has ordained certain injunctions through which the limbs of man may be safeguarded from sin. He shall question people with regard to how they utilised these limbs. The Ahadīth report that every evil perpetrated by these limbs will have to be accounted for.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the zina (fornication) of the eyes is in looking at evil, the zina of the ears is in listening to evil, the zina of the tongue is in speaking evil, the zina of the hands is in holding evil, the zina of the legs is in walking to evil and the private parts finally confirm the deed of zina (by carrying out the evil deed of zina). [*"Mishkāt" p.22*]

Sayyidina Ubāda bin Sāmit reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you guarantee six things for me then I will guarantee Heaven *(Jannah)* for you. (1) When you speak, you speak the truth. (2) When you make a promise, you fulfil it. (3) When a trust is placed in your custody, you return it. (4) You

protect your private parts. (5) You keep your gaze lowered. (6) You restrain your hands." [*"Mishkāt" p. 415*]

The heart that Allāh has granted is a great boon. Allāh says in Surah Mulk, *"Say, 'It is Him Who created you and granted you ears, eyes and hearts. Little is the gratitude you show."* The heart causes blood to circulate throughout the body and is also the organ by which a person perceives matters. A person will be accountable for the evil plots and schemes that he may have conjured with his heart and mind.

Although the limbs and organs of the body are subservient to a person in this world, in the Hereafter they will turn against him. Allāh says in Surah Nūr, *"The day when their tongues, hands and legs will testify against them regarding what they did."* [*Surah 24, verse 24*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم taught the following prayer (du'ā) to a Sahabi رضی الله عنه:

> {**TRANSLATION:** *"O Allāh! I seek refuge with you from the evil of my ears, the evil of my eyes, the evil of my tongue, the evil of my heart and the evil of my semen."*}

"And do not walk haughtily on earth. You can certainly not cleave the earth, nor can you reach the mountains in height." Allāh forbids people from being proud. If man thinks that he is great, he should look at the other creations of Allāh that are mightier than him. Although he lives on this earth he can never cleave it open, nor can he hope to attain the stature of the mountains.

Sayyidina Luqmān علیه السلام advised his son saying, *"Do not turn your face away from people and do not walk arrogantly on earth. Verily Allāh detests every arrogant braggart."* A human has no reason to be proud. He was created from a drop of dirty fluid, developed in the blood of menses and will end up as a rotten corpse.

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has mentioned that there was a person who walked about in two garments with pride and arrogance, behaving boastfully. Allāh caused the earth to swallow him up and until the Day of Judgement he will continue sinking to the depths of the earth. [*Bukhari p.490 and 861*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم also said, "When my followers *(Ummah)* walks with pride and the Romans and Persians serve them, then Allāh will cause their evil people to be dominant over the good ones." [*"Mishkāt" p. 459*]

Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that the person who humbles himself for Allāh, Allāh will elevate him. Although he will consider himself lowly, he will be highly elevated in the eyes of people. However, the person who is proud, Allāh will lower him. He will consider himself to be noble, yet he will be more debased than a pig in the eyes of people. [*"Mishkāt" p. 434*]

The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم has also mentioned that the proud people will appear on the Day of Judgement in the form of humans, but they will be the size of ants. They will be enveloped in humiliation and will be dragged to a prison in Hell called Bawlis. There a fire will be stoked for them and they will be

made to drink the blood and puss emanating from the bodies of the other people of Hell. [*"Mishkāt" p. 433*]

Sayyidina Ayādh bin Himār رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Revelation has been sent to me to, 'Adopt humility until no person prides himself over others and no person oppresses another.'" [*"Mishkāt" p. 417*]

"The evil of all of these is detestable to your Lord!' The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" writes that the *"evil"* here refers to neglecting all the good acts mentioned in the verses, *"Your Lord has commanded that you worship only Him... (up to the words) "...nor can you reach the mountains in height."* The *"evil"* also includes perpetrating all the evils mentioned in these verses. Since Allāh is our Creator and Master, it is obvious that one cannot do the things that He considers to be detestable.

ذَٰلِكَ مِمَّآ أَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ ٱلْحِكْمَةِ ۗ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِى جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ﴿٣٩﴾ أَفَأَصْفَىٰكُمْ رَبُّكُم بِٱلْبَنِينَ وَٱتَّخَذَ مِنَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنَٰثًا ۚ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

(39) These are from the matters of wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you. Do not ascribe to Allāh any other deity, for then you will be cast into Hell, reproached and rejected. (40) Has your Lord chosen sons only for you and taken the angels as His daughters? You are surely making a preposterous statement.

THOSE WHO ASCRIBE PARTNERS TO ALLĀH WILL BE CAST INTO HELL AND ATTRIBUTING CHILDREN TO ALLĀH IS EXTREMELY ABSURD

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"These are from the matters of wisdom that your Lord has revealed to you. "*i.e. These are the determined matters that Allāh wishes His servants to adopt. Here are the points of good character and virtuous deeds that have been prescribed for man. [*Qurtubi v. 10 p.264*]

"Do not ascribe to Allāh any other deity, for then you will be cast into Hell, reproached and rejected." This verse is addressed to all believers *(Mu'minīn)* and disbelievers *(kuffār)*.

It is foolish to say that Allāh has any children. To make matters worse, the polytheists of Arabia used to say that the angels were the daughters of Allāh, yet they did not wanted daughters for themselves. Expressing their insolence, Allāh says, *"Has your Lord chosen sons only for you and taken the angels as His daughters? You are surely making a preposterous statement."*

Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"They say, 'Rahmān has taken a child.' You have certainly said a grave thing. The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to smithereens. All this because they ascribed children to Allāh. It is not befitting of Rahmān to take children. Everything*

within the heavens and the earth shall come to Rahmān as slaves." [*Surah 19, verses 88-93*]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْءَانِ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا وَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾ قُل لَّوْ كَانَ مَعَهُۥٓ ءَالِهَةٌ كَمَا
يَقُولُونَ إِذًا لَّابْتَغَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِي الْعَرْشِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾ سُبْحَٰنَهُۥ وَتَعَٰلَىٰ عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٤٣﴾
تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَٰوَٰتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ ۚ وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَلَٰكِن لَّا
تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٤﴾

(41) Verily. We have expounded in diverse manners in the Qur'ān so that they may take heed. However, it only increased their resentment. (42) Say, "If there were other deities with Allāh as they claim, then they surely must have sought an inroad to the Owner of the Arsh." (43) Allāh is Pure and Exalted extremely high above what they say. (44) The seven heavens and earth together with whatever is within them glorify Him. There is nothing that does not glorify His praises, but you do not understand their glorification. Undoubtedly He is Most Forbearing, Most Forgiving.

ALLĀH IS THE ONE AND ONLY AND EXALTED ABOVE WHAT THE IDOLATORS SAY EVERYTHING IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN HIS GLORIFICATION

Allāh begins by saying, *"Verily We have expounded in diverse manners in the Qur'ān so that they may take heed."* The Qur'ān contains the proofs of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, the abomination of polytheism *(shirk)*, mention of the Hereafter and the details of good and evil deeds. Allāh says that despite all this detail, *"It only increased their resentment."* This is because the disbelievers *(kuffār)* do not heed the Qur'ānic advice and choose to remain obstinate.

"Say, 'If there were other deities with Allāh as they claim, then they surely must have sought an inroad to the Owner of the Arsh." Allāh tells the polytheists that if there were other deities, then surely they would have been powerful enough to fight Allāh for supremacy of the universe. It there was a war raging between all these deities, the system of the universe would not have been so harmonious as we see it functioning for centuries. If any of these deities had conquered the others, then certainly this one must be the true Deity because He has proven Himself to be the most powerful. Allāh declares, *"Allāh is Pure and Exalted extremely high above what they say."*

"The seven heavens and earth together with whatever is within them glorify Him (i.e. they attest to the fact that Allāh is free from all faults and weaknesses). There is nothing that does not glorify His praises, but you do not understand their glorification."

Allāh has created such beings that are living and have intelligence. These include humans, Jinn and the angels. Then there are those living creation that have limited understanding and perception. These are the animals, birds, insects, etc. These are able to eat, drink, defend themselves, reproduce, nurse their young and obey their masters. Trees are also living creatures, but their understanding is

much less than the animals.

Humans speak thousands of languages among themselves, so it is only natural that the angels and the Jinn have their own languages as well. In the same way each species of animals and birds must also have their own languages. Man does not understand these.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when a Prophet عليه السلام was bitten by an ant, he ordered that the entire colony of ants be burnt. Allāh sent revelation to him saying, "Will you burn an entire Ummah who glorifies Me because of the bite of one ant?" [*"Mishkāt" p. 361*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forbade the killing of frogs because their croaks are Tasbīh (the glorification of Allāh).

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that every morning the birds glorify Allāh and ask for their sustenance. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 15 p.84*]

There are many things that appear lifeless to us (like the mountains and earth), but are alive and are making Allāh's Tasbīh all the time. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Then there are even those (rocks) that fall because of fear for Allāh."* [*Surah 2, verse 74*]

There is no doubt that the believer *(Mu'min)* humans and Jinn, as well as the angels all make glorification *(Tasbīh)*. Even the disbelievers *(kuffār)* admit that Allāh is the Creator and the only One who can save them in times of need. Allāh says in Surah Luqmān, *"When a wave covers them like a canopy, they supplicate to Allāh, having sincere belief in Him."* [*Surah 31, verse 32*]

This admission and acknowledgement also constitutes Tasbīh. Even the king of all the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, devil *(Iblīs)*, admits Allāh to be the Lord, as he has termed Allāh in the various verses of the Qur'ān.

If these people who verbally refute Allāh are asked why a certain mountain is where it is and not anywhere else, or why do some women get male issue and other female issue, they will be helpless to answer. They are equally dumbfounded when asked why magnets attract steel and not copper, or why certain fruits and flowers have a particular colour. Similarly, there are millions of other questions that they will be unable to answer. All this signifies that they do accept Allāh, even though they do not admit it.

Some commentators have mentioned that glorification *(Tasbīh)* is of two types; verbal and the metaphysical. The metaphysical glorification *(Tasbīh)* is that everything denotes the presence of Allāh by its mere existence and attributes. When anyone passes by them, he realises that definitely a Divine Being has created this. Therefore, every creation of Allāh, be it animate or inanimate, will be an example of this glorification *(Tasbīh)*.

The other form of glorification *(Tasbīh)* that all of creation carries out viz, the verbal glorification *(Tasbīh)* is that which is spoken and heard, even though man may not be able to understand.

Allāh says about Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام in Surah Sād, *"Verily, We*

subjugated the mountains with him, who would glorify Allāh by evening and at daybreak. We also subjugated the birds, who all gathered together. They were all penitent towards Allāh." [*Surah 38, verses 18, 19*]

Bukhari reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Uhud is such a mountain that loves us and we love it." [*"Mishkāt" p. 24 and Muslim v. 2 p.245*]

Sayyidina Jābir bin Samura رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "There is a stone in Makkah that I recognise. It used to greet me before I proclaimed to be a Prophet."

Majma'uz Zawāid reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that mountains call to one another asking whether a person making remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)* had passed on them that day. When one replied that such a person had passed by it that day, the other becomes happy.

Allāh says in Surah Nūr, *"Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out? Each one knows its Salāh and method of glorification. And Allāh has knowledge of what you do."* [*Surah 24, verse 41*]

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Verily the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, including the fish pray for the forgiveness of the Ālim [scholar of religion *(D'īn)*]." [*"Mishkāt" p. 34*]

Bukhari (*p. 507*) records that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Muslims, "You will fight the Jews and be granted victory over them. Even the rocks will say, 'O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me. Kill him!' Only the Gharqad tree will not do this because it is a tree of the Jews."

The incident of the weeping pillar is famous. It was a branch of a date palm next to which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to stand and deliver the sermons. When he began to stand on the pulpit it began to weep bitterly. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had to descend from the pulpit to console it like how a person pacifies a weeping child. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that it cried because it missed the remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* that it used to listen to. [*Bukhari p. 506*]

All these narrations and verses prove that even the things that we consider to be lifeless do have life in them.

"Undoubtedly He is Most Forbearing, Most Forgiving." This verse is a reply to the Polytheists who asked why they were not being punished immediately if they were wrong. Allāh grants people respite for a while. However, He may still forgive them if they choose to repent.

وَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ حِجَابًا مَّسْتُورًا ﴿٤٥﴾
وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِىٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِذَا ذَكَرْتَ رَبَّكَ فِى ٱلْقُرْءَانِ وَحْدَهُۥ
وَلَّوْا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَـٰرِهِمْ نُفُورًا ﴿٤٦﴾ نَّحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِۦٓ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَىٰٓ

إِذْ يَقُولُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا ﴿٤٧﴾ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا۟ لَكَ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا۟ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٨﴾

(45) When you recite the Qur'ān, We place a veiling barrier between yourself and those who do not believe in the Hereafter. (46) And We place a veil upon their hearts lest they should understand it, and a prop in their ears. When you ,mention your Lord alone in the Qur'ān, they turn on their heels in aversion. (47) We know best what they attentively listen to when they attentively listen to you and when they whisper in secrecy saying, "You are merely following a bewitched man." (48) Look how they call you names! They have gone astray and will not find the way.

THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE HEREAFTER HAVE VEILS UPON THEIR HEARTS AND PROPS IN THEIR EARS ALLĀH IS WELL AWARE OF WHAT THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)* SECRETLY SPEAK

Allāh says about the polytheists and disbelievers *(kuffār)* who refute the Hereafter and do not ponder over the advices of the Qur'ān, *"When you recite the Qur'ān, We place a veiling barrier between yourself and those who do not believe in the Hereafter. And We place a veil upon their hearts lest they should understand it, and a prop in their ears."*

When people refuse to listen after constant reminders and miracles, Allāh deprives them of the ability and the guidance to accept any truth thereafter. Allāh says in Surah Saff, *"When they remained crooked, Allāh bent their hearts further."* [*Surah 61, verse 5*]

Allāh guides only those who sincerely wish to be guided and work towards their goal. Those who are obstinate are left to their own devices.

"When you mention your Lord alone in the Qur'ān, they turn on their heels in aversion." The polytheists believed in Allāh, but also attached other minor gods to Allāh's sovereignty. They took oaths by Allāh and also by these gods. Therefore, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to mention the belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to emphasise that there is only One Allāh, they disliked this and left the gathering.

"We know best what they attentively listen to when they attentively listen to you..." They used to pretend to be interested, but presented themselves to interrupt the recitation of the Qur'ān with their mutterings and noise. They listened so that they could mock the Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, Allāh knew their intentions. Allāh also knew well *"when they whisper in secrecy saying, 'You are merely following a bewitched man.'"*

Allāh continues to say, *"Look how they call you names!"* They would call the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a wizard, a madman, a poet, a soothsayer, etc. Allāh declares, *"They have gone astray and will not find the way."* This is so because their ability to perceive has been lost.

وَقَالُوٓا۟ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمًا وَرُفَٰتًا أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا (49) ۞ قُلْ كُونُوا۟ حِجَارَةً أَوْ
حَدِيدًا (50) أَوْ خَلْقًا مِّمَّا يَكْبُرُ فِى صُدُورِكُمْ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَا ۖ قُلِ ٱلَّذِى
فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۚ فَسَيُنْغِضُونَ إِلَيْكَ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَكُونَ
قَرِيبًا (51) يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِۦ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (52)

(49) They say, "Is it that when we turn into bones and pieces, we will be resurrected as a new creation?" (50) Say, "Become stones or metal... (51) ..... or any other creation that seems appealing in your hearts." Soon they will say, "Who will resurrect us?" Say, "Him Who created you the first time " They will then nod their heads to you saying, "When will it be?" Say, "It will occur very shortly." (52) The day when He will summon you, you shall respond by praising Him and you will think that you tarried only for a little while.

THE REPLY TO THE DISBELIEVERS WHO EXPRESS SURPRISE THAT THEY WILL BE RESURRECTED AFTER BEING DECOMPOSED

While the previous verses discussed those who refute revelation, these verses discuss those people who refute resurrection. When they were presented with the belief of resurrection and Qiyāmah, they said, *"Is it that when we turn into bones and pieces, we will be resurrected as a new creation?"*

The reply to their astonishment is given as *"Say, 'Become stones or metal or any other creation that seems appealing in your hearts."* Although bones were once part of a living being, Allāh tells them that even if they become objects like stones and metal (that had no previous association with life), then too Allāh will raise them on the Day of Judgement. Allāh has power over everything.

After listening to this, *"Soon they will say, 'Who will resurrect us?' Say, 'Him Who created you the first time."* When Allāh created them from a drop of dirty fluid, He can certainly recreate them. In fact, according to man's understanding, for anyone to repeat an act is easier than doing it the first time. Allāh mentions in Surah Rūm, *'it is He Who initiated the creation and will recreate it, which will be easier for Him."* [*Surah 30, verse 27*]

Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Has man not seen that We created him from a seed, after which he is suddenly an open adversary? He coins similitude's for us and forgets how he was created. He says, 'Who will give life to bones after they have decomposed?' Say, 'The One Who gave life to it the first time will revive it. He has knowledge of all things."* [*Surah 36, verses 77-79*]

When the disbelievers *(kuffār)* are convinced about the possibility of judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, they then adopt another stance. Allāh describes this saying, *"They will then nod their heads to you saying* (sarcastically), *'When will it be?"* It is indeed strange that when man does not see anything taking place before him, he thinks that it will never happen. As Allāh mentions in another verse that many a nation asked the Prophets عليهم السلام, *"When shall this promise [of*

judgment day (Qiyāmah)] materialise if you are truthful?"

Allāh gives the following reply in Surah Saba, *"Say, 'You have an appointment of a day, which you will be unable to postpone for moment, nor bring forward."* [*Surah 34, verse 30*]

Here in Surah Isrā Allāh replies by saying, *"Say, 'It will occur very shortly."* Whatever is still pending is considered to be close by and whatever has passed is considered to be far gone. Allāh says in Surah Ān'ām, *"Without a trace of doubt, what you have been promised will certainly come to pass and you cannot escape."*

"(On) The day [of judgment day (Qiyāmah)] when He will summon you, you shall respond by praising Him..." Mankind will all gather on the plains of reckoning reciting, *"Alhamdu Lillāh" ("All praise be for Allāh").*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abd bin Humayd رحمة الله عليه that the people will all be reciting, "Subhān'a Kallāhumma Wa Bihamdik." Even the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will recite this, but it will not help them.

".....and you will think that you tarried only for a little while." Because of the strain of the Day of Judgement, people will think that their stay in the world and in their graves was for an extremely short period.

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿53﴾ رَّبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ ۖ إِن يَشَأْ يَرْحَمْكُمْ أَوْ إِن يَشَأْ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ ۚ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿54﴾ وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۖ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا ﴿55﴾

(53) Tell My bondsmen that they should speak what is good. Undoubtedly Devil (Shaytān) will create friction between them. Indeed Devil (Shaytān) is an open enemy to man. (54) Your Lord knows you best. If He wills, He may show mercy to you and if He wills He may punish you. We have not sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم] as a warder to them. (55) Your Lord knows best who is in the heavens and the earth. Verily We have favoured some Prophets above others and granted Dawūd the Zabūr.

PEOPLE ARE INSTRUCTED TO SPEAK ONLY WHAT IS GOOD, CERTAIN PROPHETS عليهم السلام ARE SUPERIOR TO OTHERS AND SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام RECEIVED THE ZABŪR

Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Tell My bondsmen that they should speak what is good."* This includes all speech that is gentle and beneficial. It refers to all the details mentioned as *"Mow'idhatul Hasanah (Beautiful exhortation)"*. All speech that will be accepted by people and cause them to embrace the truth is implied by this verse. These modes of speech must be adopted when propagating Islām to the people. One should refer to verse 125 of Surah Nahl (Surah 16), where we have explained the details of "Mow'idhatul

Hasanah" and how to debate with people cordially.

"Undoubtedly Shaytān will create friction between them." *Devil (Shaytān)* waits to exploit any opportunity whereby Muslims and disbelievers *(kuffār)* may enter into a dispute and battle. This is so because *"Indeed* Devil *(Shaytān) is an open enemy to man."*

Some commentators say that Allāh is advising the believers *(Mu'minīn)* at large that they should live in harmony with each other and not cause Devil *(Shaytān)* to divide them. [*Qurtubi v. 10 p. 277*]

"Your Lord knows you best. If He wills, He may show mercy to you and if He wills He may punish you." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni' writes that the believer *(Mu'minīn)* should tell the polytheists that Allāh may be merciful to them by granting them Imān, or He may punish them by granting them death as disbelievers *(kuffār)*. They should not be told directly that they will enter Hell because this will make them more obstinate.

"We have not sent you [O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم*] as a warder to them."*

The task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was only to pass the message on to the people, not to force it on them.

"Your Lord knows best who is in the heavens and the earth." Certain commentators have mentioned that this verse is a reply to those polytheists who said that it was not possible for an orphan (whose companions had no decent clothes and food) to become a Prophet instead of the leaders and affluent people.

Allāh tells them that He best knows the physical and spiritual merits of every person on earth, and He may confer the mantle of Prophethood on whomsoever He pleases. Allāh says in Surah Ān'ām, *'Allāh knows best where to entrust His message."* [*Surah 6, verse 124*]

"Verily We have favoured some Prophets above others..." The details about this were discussed in the commentary of verse 253 of Surah Baqarah (*Surah* 2).

".....and granted Dawūd the Zabūr." Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه has written in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*V3 p.120*) that the Zabūr comprised of 150 chapters and contained du'ās (*supplications*) and praises of Allāh. There was no mention in it of obligations *(Farāidh)*, compulsories *(Wājibāt)*, penal codes and matters pertaining to Lawful *(Halāl)* and unlawful *(Harām)*. The original Zabūr cannot be traced today, so nothing can be verified. It is possible that it did contain some laws and injunctions of religion *(D'īn)*.

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was from the Bani Isra'īl and the Bani Isra'īl used to follow the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Even the last Prophet from the Bani Isrā'īl viz. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام said, 'I confirm that which was before me of the Torah, and I make lawful for you some of that which was forbidden unto you." Although certain changes were effected in the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, the rest of the Shari'ah was like that of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Therefore, it may be assumed that the Zabūr did not contain any laws because these were already discussed in the Torah of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُم مِّن دُونِهِ فَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفَ الضُّرِّ عَنكُمْ وَلَا تَحْوِيلًا (56) أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ ۚ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا (57) وَإِن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا نَحْنُ مُهْلِكُوهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوهَا عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۚ كَانَ ذَٰلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُورًا (58)

(56) Say, "Call on those that you consider as gods besides Allāh. They are unable to remove difficulties from you, nor can they alleviate them." (57) Those that the idolaters call upon also seek a means to approach their Lord, (vying with each other to see) who of them shall be closest and they aspire for His mercy while fearing His punishment. Undoubtedly, the punishment of your Lord is frightening. (58) We shall destroy every town before the day of judgment (Qiyāmah) or severely punish it. This has been recorded in the Book.

THE FALSE GODS CANNOT EVEN ASSUAGE ANY HARDSHIP AND EVERY TOWN WILL BE DESTROYED OR PUNISHED BEFORE THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

The polytheists worshipped many idols that they shaped according to the form of Shaytān, while many also worshipped the angels, the Jinn and Sayyidina Isā and Maryam عليهما السلام. Allāh says with regard to these false gods, *"Say, 'Call on those that you consider as gods besides Allāh. They are unable to remove difficulties from you, nor can they alleviate them."* Only Allāh has the ability to do this.

"Those that the idolators call upon [i.e. their gods like Sayyidina Isā and Sayyidah Maryam عليهما السلام] *also seek a means to approach their Lord,* (vying with each other to see) *who of them shall be closest and they aspire for His mercy while fearing His punishment.*

Bukhari (*v. 2 p.685*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه that certain people worshipped certain jinns. Although these jinns became Muslims, their worshippers refused to desist. The above verse was revealed with regard to this.

It is obvious that the verse does not refer to the idols since they are lifeless, but even the living gods of these people cannot effect any good or evil without Allāh's will. They cannot even help themselves. Allāh commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, 49. *Say, "I do not possess the power to hurt myself nor to benefit myself except what Allāh wills.* [*Surah Yunus (10), verse 49*]

"Undoubtedly, the punishment of your Lord is frightening." The Prophets عليهم السلام and the angels who are worshipped all recognise Allāh and therefore fear His punishment.

"..... they aspire for His mercy while fearing His punishment." From this part of the verse, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has deduced that aspiration for Allāh's

mercy and fear for Him should be found equally in a person when he worships Allāh. This verse also proves that it is not incorrect to have an aspiration for Heaven *(Jannah)* and fear for Hell when worshipping Allāh. When some pious ones mention that they do not worship Allāh for Heaven *(Jannah)* nor to be saved from Hell, they mean that Allāh should be worshipped even if Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell were not present.

One should always maintain hope in Allāh's mercy as well as fear for His punishment. However, when one is approaching death, 'one's hope should exceed one's fear.

"We shall destroy every town before the day of judgment (Qiyāmah) or severely punish it." Many towns were ruined when the inhabitants all died naturally leaving none to live on. Others were destroyed by Allāh's punishment. However, the rest will certainly be destroyed when the trumpet is blown to sound the advent of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"Every soul shall taste death."*

The Ahadīth have mentioned the destruction of certain towns. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Leave the people of Habsha (*ethiopia*) as long as they leave you, because it will be person of Habsha with short calves who will remove the treasures of the Ka'ba." [*Abu Dawūd*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the last town to be deserted will be Madinah. [*"Mishkāt" p. 240*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "People will leave Madinah in a very good state. There shall be only wild animals in search of food. The last to be brought there will be two shepherds of the Bani Muzayna tribe who will head for Madinah calling to their flocks. When they arrive they will see Madinah deserted and they will drop dead on their faces upon reaching Thaniyatul Wadā." According to another narration, they will find only wild animals there. [*Bukhari p.252*]

The commentator of Muslim, Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه says that this incident will occur just before judgment the last hour.

"This has been recorded in the Book." The above will certainly occur since it has already been decreed in the protected tablet *(Lawhul Mahfūz)*.

وَمَا مَنَعَنَآ أَن نُّرْسِلَ بِٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ إِلَّآ أَن كَذَّبَ بِهَا ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ ۚ وَءَاتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ ٱلنَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا۟ بِهَا ۚ وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا ﴿٥٩﴾

(59) The only factor that prevented us from sending signs was that the former people had denied them. We granted the camel to the Thamud as a portent, but they treated it unjustly. We send signs only as warnings.

MIRACLES ARE NOT SHOWN BECAUSE THE FORMER PEOPLE DENIED THEM

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p.121*) and "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 15 p.103*) report the following narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه from "Ahmad",

"Nasā'ī" and "Tabrani". He narrates that the Makkans requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to transform the mount of Safa into gold and remove all the mountains from Makkah so that they could cultivate the land. They said that they would believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if he did this.

Allāh informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that if he wanted, Allāh could grant them respite (and not fulfil the request); otherwise He could fulfil the request for them. If they then did not believe, they would all be destroyed like the people of the past. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pleaded to Allāh to rather grant them respite. It was on this occasion that the above verse was revealed.

"The only factor that prevented us from sending signs was that the former people had denied them." Allāh says in this verse that He does not show them the signs (miracles) that they demand because it would lead to their destruction when they reject them. This was the condition of the former people and they were likely to do the same.

"We granted the camel to the Thamūd as a portent, but they treated it unjustly." According to the request of the Thamūd, Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام performed the miracle of removing a pregnant camel from a rock. However, when he told them that the camel will drink from the watering hole every alternate day and their animals will drink in the intermediate days, they acted unjustly by killing the camel. Thereafter Allāh's punishment destroyed them all.

By right, they were supposed to believe from the time when the camel was removed from the rock, but they did not. Allāh has mentioned the incident of the Thamūd because they were Arabs and the ruins of their city could be seen by the Quraysh as they travelled to Syria.

"We send signs only as warnings." The previous Ummahs were warned that they would be destroyed if they did not believe in the miracles. When they did not believe they were annihilated. Since this Ummah will not be destroyed in this manner, their requests for miracles will not be entertained.

Other commentators mention that this verse refers to signs like solar and lunar eclipses, lightning, thunder, cyclones, earthquakes, etc. These are normally sent by Allāh to warn man so that he takes heed and mends his ways.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّءْيَا الَّتِي أَرَيْنَاكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُونَةَ فِي الْقُرْءَانِ وَنُخَوِّفُهُمْ فَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا طُغْيَانًا كَبِيرًا ﴿60﴾

(60) When We told you that your Lord. encompasses people. We only made the sight that We showed you and the accursed tree mentioned in the Qur'ān as trials for the people. And We warn them, but this only increases their rebellion tremendously.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR LORD IS ALL ENCOMPASSING AND THE SIGHT AND THE TREE ARE MERELY TESTS FOR THE PEOPLE

Allāh firstly addresses His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"When We told*

you that your Lord encompasses people." Allāh has knowledge of all past, present and future affairs. He knows exactly what will be the destiny of every person and what trials they may have to suffer in this world.

"We only made the sight that We showed you and the accursed tree mentioned in the Qur'ān as trials for the people." i.e. as a trial to see which of them will believe and who will reject. Although the word "ru'yah" normally refers to a dream, it also refers to something that is seen while one is awake. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that in this context the word refers to something seen in a conscious state, The *"accursed tree"* refers to the tree called "Zaqqūm." [*Bukhari*]

The entire epic of ascension *(Mi'rāj)* has already been mentioned. It was mentioned there that many of the polytheists did not believe the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he reported the incident to them. However, the believers *(Mu'minīn)* had firm faith in the words of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In this way, the belief *(Imān)* of the people was tested.

Surah Sāffāt and Surah Wāqi'ah make mention of the Zaqqūm tree in Hell. Allāh says about it in Surah Sāffāt, *"We have certainly made it a test for the oppressors."* [*Surah 37, verse 63*]

The people of Hell, because of their extreme hunger, will eat from this tree although it will taste very unpleasant. Thereafter they will be given boiling water to drink (as mentioned in verse 67 of Surah Sāffāt).

Verse 64 and 65 of Surah Sāffāt mention that the roots of the Zaqqūm tree will be in the depths of Hell and it will appear like the heads of snakes. A hadith of "Mishkāt" (*p.503*) states that the taste of this tree is so foul that if one drop of it is placed in this world, it would spoil all of man's sustenance.

It is narrated that Abu Jahl sarcastically told the people that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was warning them of a fire, the fuel of which is stone, yet says that there is a tree therein. He told them that fire burns trees, so how could it exist there? A person by the name of Abdullāh bin Zab'ari (who was then not a Muslim), said that, in his opinion, Zaqqūm was dates and butter. Thereafter, Abu Jahl told his slave girl to serve them some Zaqqūm i.e. dates and butter. He then announced, "O people! Come and partake of the Zaqqūm that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم warns you of." Thereafter Allāh revealed the verse of Surah Sāffāt describing this tree. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p.122*]

The polytheists mockingly called dates and butter Zaqqūm. By making these snide remarks and rejecting the words of Allāh and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they fell deeper into the abyss of disbelief *(kufr)*. This made the tree a test of their belief *(Imān)*.

"And We warn them (of the punishment of the Hereafter), but this only increases their rebellion tremendously."

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ ءَأَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ خَلَقْتَ طِينًا ﴿٦١﴾ قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَكَ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى كَرَّمْتَ عَلَىَّ لَئِنْ أَخَّرْتَنِ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ

لَأَحْتَنِكَنَّ ذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿62﴾ قَالَ ٱذْهَبْ فَمَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
جَزَآؤُكُمْ جَزَآءً مَّوْفُورًا ﴿63﴾ وَٱسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ ٱسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُم بِصَوْتِكَ وَأَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِم
بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَوْلَٰدِ وَعِدْهُمْ ۚ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ
إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿64﴾ إِنَّ عِبَادِى لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنٌ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا ﴿65﴾

(61) When We told the angels, "Prostrate to Ādam!" they all prostrated except Satan (Iblīs). He said, "Should I prostrate to one whom You have created from mud?" (62) He said, "Are You telling me that this is the being whom You have honoured above me? If You grant me respite until the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), I will surely gain control of his progeny save a few individuals." (63) Allāh said, "Go henceforth! Whoever of them will follow you, then Hell will definitely be ample retribution for them." (64) "Annihilate as many of them as you can with your call, attack them with your cavalry and infantry, be a partner in their wealth and children and promise them. The promises made by Satan (Shaytān) are only deceptive." (65) "Indeed you will have no sway over My bondsmen. Your Lord suffices as an ally."

THE REPLY OF IBLĪS AFTER REFUSING TO PROSTATE TO SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام, AND HIS VOW TO MISLEAD MAN ALLĀH ALLOWS HIM TO GAIN CONTROL OF WHOMSOEVER HE CAN

After creating Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, Allāh instructed all the dwellers of the heavens (the angels and Satan *(Iblīs)*, who lived with them) to make prostration *(sajdah)* to him as a token of respect. Recounting this incident, Allāh says, *"When We told the angels, 'Prostrate to Ādam!' they all prostrated except Iblīs."*

When Allāh asked him why he did not make sajdah, Satan *(Iblīs)* argued that he was created from fire (which he deemed to be superior), while Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was created from sand. He said, *"Should I prostrate to one whom You have created from mud?"* He also said, *'Are You telling me that this is the being whom You have honoured above me?"*

Allāh then cursed him and he was dispelled from the heavens. The details of this are discussed in verses 11 to 25 of Surah A'rāf (Surah 7) and verses 71 to 85 of Surah Sād (*Surah 38*). As he was cursed, he requested, *"If You grant me respite until the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), I will surely gain control of his progeny save a few individuals."* He refers to the exceptions in Surah Hijr and Surah Sād by saying, *"Except Your chosen bondsmen from them."*

Iblīs knew that Allāh had created man to be His viceroy on earth. Therefore, he realised that some of them will truly fulfil this task of theirs and will not be influenced by him.

"Allāh said, 'Go henceforth! Whoever of them will follow you, then Hell will definitely be their ample retribution for them." Surah Sād says that Allāh told him, *"Allāh declared, 'I speak the truth, and it is the truth that I always speak. I shall certainly*

fill Hell with yourself and all those of them who follow you." [*Surah 38, verses 84, 85*]

Thereafter Allāh addressed him further saying, *'Annihilate as many of them as you can with your call, attack them with your cavalry and infantry..."* This means, according to the Arabic proverb (*"with your cavalry and infantry"*), that he could employ all the resources available to him to mislead man. After reporting this, Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه also narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that every horse that is led in Allāh's disobedience, every footstep taken for this purpose, all unlawful (*Harām*) wealth acquired and all illegitimate children are products of Shaytān's ploys.

Allāma Qurtubi (*v. 1 p.288*) says that any call towards Allāh's disobedience will be regarded as being part of the process 'to *'Annihilate as many of them as you can with your call..."*

It has been narrated from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that this *"call"* refers to music, singing and dancing. They say that Satan (*Shaytān*) employs these evils to mislead man from the truth and to make him negligent of his Salāh and other religious duties. It will be noticed that those people who are enamoured with the works of Satan (*Shaytān*) have a liking for music.

Nowadays, churches and temples cannot be imagined without musical instruments and singing. Cinemas, radios and television are all inundated with music. Many people claim that the musical "Qawali" sessions that they participate in accrue rewards, for them because the songs contain praises of Allāh and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is foolish because they spend entire nights engrossed in this and hence miss the Fajr Salāh for the sole purpose of enjoying themselves. They merely please Satan (*Shaytān*) by this.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "My Lord has commanded me to destroy musical instruments, idols, the cross and all practices of ignorance." [*"Mishkāt" p. 318*]

It is the height of ignorance to utilise such means to praise the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he was commanded to destroy. To make matters worse, they consider the act to be pleasing to Allāh! Satan (*Shaytān*) has such a hold of these people that they cannot perceive the truth of the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth.

Allāh further told devil (*Shaytān*), *"be a partner in their wealth and children..."* This means that he could deceive them into earning Harām income and spending their wealth [Lawful (*Halāl*) or unlawful (*Harām*)] in unlawful (*Harām*) avenues.

According to other commentators, the verse means that people will be lured to make their wealth Lawful (*Halāl*) and Harām (*unlawful*), like how the polytheists made certain animals Lawful (*Halāl*) for themselves and forbade others.

With regard to being a partner in their children, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned two interpretations. The first is that people will be induced to kill their children or to do any other unlawful (*Harām*) activity with them. The other interpretation is that children will be named Abdul Hārith [slave of Devil (*Shaytān*)], Abdul Lāt (the slave of Lāt, an idol), Abdul Uzza (the slave of

Uzza, another idol), Abdush Shams (the slave of the sun), etc.

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه interpreted this verse to mean that parents will be so influenced with beliefs of infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* that they will teach these things to their children.

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that when a man has intercourse with his wife without reciting "Bismillah," Devil *(Shaytān)* joins him in the act. Devil *(Shaytān)* then has a share in the resultant offspring. [All the above interpretations have been quoted from Qurtubi v. 2 p.89]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once asked her, "Have you seen any 'Maghribūn' among you?" When she enquired who the "Maghribūn" were, he replied, "These are those people whose partners are the Devils *(Shaytān's)*."

Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه has written in "Mirqāt" (*v. 8 p.367*) that Devil *(Shaytān)* has a share in illegitimate children because he was the one who initiated that acts of adultery that caused the birth of these children.

It is reported in the book "Ākāmul Marjān" (*v. 1 p.77*) from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that hermaphroditic people are the children of devil *(Shaytān)*. When someone asked him how this was possible, he replied, "Allāh has prohibited his Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from cohabiting when a woman is menstruating. Therefore, when a person has intercourse with his menstruating wife, the children born of this communion are hermaphrodites."

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that devil *(Shaytān)* cannot harm the child who was conceived from that communion before which the father recited,

{TRANSL4TION: "I begin with the name of Allāh. O Allāh! Keep devil (Shaytān) away from us and keep him away from the child that You bestow upon us. } [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

The commentators of hadith have reported that the child conceived after reciting the above dua will not suffer from epilepsy, nor from insanity. Others say that devil *(Shaytān)* will not be able to attack the Belief *(Imān)* of this child. Such a child will live as a Muslim and die as one.

Allāh also told devil *(Shaytān)* to *"promise them."* e.g. devil *(Shaytān)* promises people that their false gods will intercede for them in the Hereafter, that their lineage will rescue them in the Hereafter irrespective of their deeds, etc. He promises various things to various people, according to the situation. However, Allāh warns man, *"The promises made by* devil *(Shaytān) are only deceptive."*

Allāh then tells Satan *(Iblīs)* that try as he may, *'indeed you will have no sway over My bondsmen."* In Surah Hijr Allāh mentions that He told devil *(Shaytān)*, *'indeed you will have no sway over My bondsmen, except those deviant ones who follow you."* [*Surah 15, verse 42*]

Those who are caught in devils *(Shayātīn)* clutches cannot escape, nor will they want to. As for those who wish to be safeguarded from him and trust in

Allāh, they should remember that *"Your Lord suffices as an ally."* Allāh shall protect them from devil *(Shaytān).*

Note: In the above verses, Allāh neither permitted nor instructed Iblīs to. carry out all these actions, because Allāh will never do such a thing. Allāh was warning him that should he do these actions, he should also fear the repercussions. These are as He has mentioned in Surah Sād, *"I shall certainly fill Hell with yourself and all those of them who follow you."* [*Surah 38, verses 84, 85*]

رَّبُّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى يُزْجِى لَكُمُ ٱلْفُلْكَ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ لِتَبْتَغُوا۟ مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِكُمْ
رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٦﴾ وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ ٱلضُّرُّ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَن تَدْعُونَ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰكُمْ إِلَى ٱلْبَرِّ
أَعْرَضْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ كَفُورًا ﴿٦٧﴾ أَفَأَمِنتُمْ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ ٱلْبَرِّ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ
عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا۟ لَكُمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٨﴾ أَمْ أَمِنتُمْ أَن يُعِيدَكُمْ فِيهِ تَارَةً
أُخْرَىٰ فَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ قَاصِفًا مِّنَ ٱلرِّيحِ فَيُغْرِقَكُم بِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ ۙ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا۟ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا
بِهِۦ تَبِيعًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ۞ وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ
ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾

(66) Your Lord is He Who causes the ships to move with you so that you may seek from His bounty. Indeed He is Most Merciful to you. (67) When any adversity afflicts you at sea, all those that you call besides Him are lost to you. When He rescues you to land, you turn away. Man was ever ungrateful. (68) Are you not concerned that He may take you to the outer limit of the land, causing you to sink there? Or unleash a storm that rains stones on you, where after you shall not find a helper? (69) Or are you not concerned that He will return you to the sea and then send a severe tempest to you? Then you will be drowned on account of your sins and will not find any avenger against Us. (70) It is indeed true that We have granted honour to the children of Ādam. We carried him on land and sea, provided him with pure sustenance and granted him great superiority over many of Our creation.

ALLĀH HAS THE POWER TO DESTROY MAN AS AND WHEN HE PLEASES

Allāh begins by saying, *"Your Lord is He Who causes the ships to move with you..."* Even without the agency of the wind, Allāh granted man the intelligence to develop ships that travel with engines. In this manner, man is able to derive numerous benefits from the sea, like food, medicines, valuables and other things with which he can earn a living. All these are implied in the phrase, *"so that you may seek from His bounty."* One of the greatest benefits of the sea and ships is, of course, that goods can be imported and exported to the various continents. Recalling all these bounties, man should realise that *'indeed He is Most Merciful to*

you."

Allāh then speaks of man's terrible attitude of remembering Him only in distress, using all the times of safety to worship others. Allāh says, *"When any adversity afflicts you at sea, all those that you call besides Him are lost to you. When He rescues you to land, you turn away. Man was ever ungrateful."*

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Allāh, turning to Him only. Then, when Allāh confers a bounty upon him, he forgets for what he supplicated to Allāh before. He then ascribes partners to Allāh, thereby misleading (others)from Allāh's path. Say, 'Enjoy your disbelief for a while! You will certainly be from the inmates of the Fire.'"* [*Surah 39, verse 8*]

Allāh says in Surah Ankabūt, *"When they board a ship they supplicate to Allāh with sincere belief in Him. But when He rescues them to land, they again begin to ascribe partners to Him."* [*Surah 29, verse 65*]

Allāh then warns man that although he may have been rescued this time, there is always a possibility that he may encounter other calamities. Allāh says, *"Are you not concerned that He may take you to the outer limit of the land, causing you to sink there? Or unleash a storm that rains stones on you, where after you shall not find a helper? Or are you not concerned that He will return you to the sea and then send a severe tempest to you? Then you will be drowned on account of your sins and will not find any avenger against Us."*

Thereafter Allāh speaks of the distinction that He bestowed upon man. He says, *'it is indeed true that We have granted honour to the children of Ādam. We carried him (man) on land and sea, provided him with pure sustenance and granted him great superiority over many of Our creation."*

Allāh bestowed man with the distinctive qualities of clear and eloquent speech. He can verbally express himself in various ways, as well as use the written word to do the same. Allāh has also gifted him with physical beauty that other creations do not possess. He is neither too large, nor too small and also has sufficient strength to carry out his tasks.

Allāh has also granted man the power of intelligence to discern matters by which he is able to harness the services of the other creations. Allāh has even allowed him to ride a large and powerful creation like the elephant and control large mountain-like ships. Allāh refers to this when He says, *"We carried him on land and sea."*

".....provided him with pure sustenance..." Allāh has bestowed man with the best of foods, clothing and bedding. The Arabic word *"Tayyibāt"* (translated above as "pure") refers to all things that are wholesome, beautiful, Lawful *(Halāl)* and beneficial. It does not refer only to foods.

"..... and granted him great superiority over many of Our creation." The superiority of man is physical and spiritual, and it applies to both the worlds. The Prophets عليهم السلام were the best of Allāh's creation. Therefore, man has the privilege of being from the same species as the best of creation.

The above verse does not state that all members of the human race are superior to all the members of the other creations. Therefore, one cannot ask

what superiority has the infidels *(kāfir)* got over other creations when he will be doomed to Hell. On a general basis man has been preferred above all the other creations with regard to the bounties of this world.

Allāh did not say that man is superior to all creation, but he has superiority over 'many" of the creation. Therefore, it will be proper to say that the angels are superior to the average Muslim. The details of this belief can be found in the books of Aqā'id (Islāmic beliefs).

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ فَمَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧١﴾ وَمَن كَانَ فِي هَٰذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٧٢﴾

(71) The day when We will call every person by his Imām. As for those who will be given their book in their right hand, they will be the ones who will read their book and will not be oppressed in the least. (72) Whoever is blind in this world will be blind in the Hereafter and will be even more astray.

THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY BLIND IN THIS WORLD WILL BE BLIND IN THE HEREAFTER

Referring to the Day of Judgement Allāh says, *"The day when We will call every person by his Imām."* The Arabic word "Imām" refers to a person's record of deeds according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Hasan and Qatadah رحمة الله عليه. [*Qurtubi*]

In verses 13 and 14 of this Surah Allāh mentioned, *"We shall cast every person 's record of deeds upon his neck. On the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah) We shall take out for him a book that he will see opened before him. 'Read your book. Today you are a sufficient witness against yourself."*

The person whose record will be good will call to others saying, *"Come and read my record! I was certain that my reckoning would take place."* Allāh continues to say, *"As for those who will be given their book in their right hand, they will be the ones who will read their book and will not be oppressed in the least."* The Arabic word "fatīl" refers to the tiny string that is found in the slit of a date seed. The Arabs use the word to denote anything that is miniscule and insignificant.

Surah Hāqa mentions that the unsuccessful people will receive their record of deeds in their left hand, while Surah Inshiqāq states that they will receive it behind their backs. This will be so because they will receive the book in their left hands while their hands are tied behind their backs. These people will be doomed to Hell.

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the word *'Imām"* refers to the Prophets عليهم السلام. Therefore, each nation will be called with their Prophet عليه السلام. This interpretation is supported by the verse of Surah Nisā where Allāh says, *"How will it be when We shall bring forth from every nation a witness?"* [*Surah 4, verse 41*]

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has also quoted another interpretation that states that every nation will be called with the divine scripture that they received. They will then be asked if they had practised the teachings of their scripture.

Note: Some people have incorrectly translated the word "Imām" as "mothers." This is incorrect because the Arabic word for 'mothers' will be "Ummahāt" not "Imām." Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"On the Day of Judgement you will be called by your names and your father's names, therefore keep good names."* [*Abu Dawūd*]

Bukhari has also written a chapter proving that people will be summoned on the Day of Judgement by their fathers' names, not their mothers'. The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has disproved the fact that people can be called by the names of their mother's since these falsify the authentic Ahadīth.

"Whoever is blind in this world will be blind in the Hereafter and will be even more astray." Allāh has created the perfect system of this world and He has filled it with various natural signs like the sun, moon, stars, mountains, rivers, etc. Seeing these, man cannot help but to recognise Allāh. In addition to this Allāh has also sent the Prophets عليهم السلام with the message of oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and proved their authenticity by miracles and various signs. However, there are those who chose to turn a blind eye to these factors and do not believe.

As they were spiritually blind in the world, they will be physically blind in the Hereafter because they will be unable to mend their ways then. In fact, it will be too late in the Hereafter. In this world they could always repent, but the Hereafter has no room for repentance. It is for this reason that they will be *"even more astray" in* the Hereafter.

Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Have they not travelled in the land so that they develop hearts to understand and ears to hear? It is really not eyes that become blind, but the hearts that lie in bosoms which become blind."* [*Surah 22, verse 46*]

Allāh says in verse 97 of this Surah, *"We shall raise them on their faces on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), blind, dumb and deaf. Their abode shall be Hell. Each time it abates, We will increase its intensity."* This verse proves that such people will even be physically handicapped on the Day of Judgement.

وَإِن كَادُوا لَيَفْتِنُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ لِتَفْتَرِيَ عَلَيْنَا غَيْرَهُ وَإِذًا لَّاتَّخَذُوكَ خَلِيلًا ﴿٧٣﴾ وَلَوْلَا أَن ثَبَّتْنَاكَ لَقَدْ كِدتَّ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٤﴾ إِذًا لَّأَذَقْنَاكَ ضِعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضِعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ عَلَيْنَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

(73) They had begun to turn you away from what We have revealed unto you so that you may attribute something else to Us. They would then have taken you as a friend. (74) If We had not kept you firm, you could have inclined slightly towards them. (75) In that case We would have let you taste a double punishment in this life and after death. Then you would not have found any assistant for you against Us.

THE POLYTHEISTS WANTED THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم TO INCLINE TOWARDS THEM AND THEN MAKE HIM THEIR FRIEND

Many unauthentic narrations have been reported about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of this verse. Of those that may be regarded as reliable, the following has been reported from Ibn Abi H ātim in "Ruhul Ma'āni".

Sayyidina Jubayr bin Nufayr رحمة الله عليه reports that the Quraysh approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and told him that if he wanted them to draw close to him, he should get rid of the poor and underrated Sahābah رضى الله عنهم. (It was mentioned in the commentary of verse 52 of Surah Ān'ām (*Surah 6*) that this incident caused the revelation of the verse: *"Do not shun those who call unto their Lord morning and evening, aspiring for His pleasure...)"*

Thereafter "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from the same source that the Quraysh then asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to replace the verses containing punishment to verses containing mercy and vice versa. They said that they would then follow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The above verses were revealed with regard to this.

Whatever that incident may be, it is evident from the wording of the verse that the polytheists made some request to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that was contrary to the Shari'ah, promising to be his friend if he complied. However Allāh kept the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم firmly on the truth and he did not even sway an inkling towards them.

Allāh says that had the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم inclined towards the polytheists, *"We would have let you taste a double punishment in this life and after death. Then you would not have found any assistant for you against Us."* This verse serves to warn the Muslims of the consequences that they would suffer if they were to fall into such a trap of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and polytheists.

(76) They were close to uprooting you from this earth to remove you from it. If this had happened, only a few of them would have remained behind you. (77) This was the practice of Our messengers that We sent before you. You will not find any change in Our practices.

THE POLYTHEISTS WANTED TO REMOVE THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم FORCEFULLY FROM MAKKAH

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه report that the polytheists intended to forcefully expel the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from Makkah. However, Allāh intended that he migrate peacefully with Allāh's

permission.

Allāh says, *"They were close to uprooting you from this earth to remove you from it. If this had happened, only a few of them would have remained behind you."* If they had attempted to forcefully remove the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh would have caused them to perish in His punishment. However, Allāh had mercy on them and instructed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to leave by himself. In this way, the polytheists were not annihilated and were later afforded the opportunity to accept Islām.

"This was the practice of our messengers that we sent before you." The polytheists of Makkah would also be punished if they had forceful expelled the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, just as the previous nations were destroyed when they did this to their Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh then says, *"You will not find any change in Our practices."*

(78) Establish Salāh from the setting of the sun until darkness of the night, as well as the Fajr Salāh. Indeed the Fajr Salāh is attended. (79) In a portion of the night perform the Salāh of Tahajjud that is extra for you. Soon your Lord will accord to you the "Maqām Mahmūd".

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SALĀH AND THE "MAQĀM MAHMŪD"

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that after consoling the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and telling him of the disbelievers *(kuffār's)* plot, Allāh turns his attention to worship. Allāh then promises him the *"Maqām Mahmūd,"* which is such an exalted position that the entire mankind will envy.

Allāh says, *"Establish Salāh from the setting of the sun until darkness of the night..."* The Arabic word *"dulūkush shams"* refers to either the setting of the sun or the time when the sun has passed its meridian after noon. While Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه have adopted the second meaning, other Sahābah رضى الله عنهم and commentators have adopted the first.

According to the "Qāmūs" and "Mufradātul Qur'ān" the word "Ghasaqul Layl" refers to both the beginning of the night as well as to the later, more intense darkness of the night.

If the first word is interpreted as the time when the sun passes its zenith, and the second word is interpreted as the later darkness of the night, then the verse will denote all four Salāhs from Zuhr until Isha. The next part of the verse specifically mentions the Fajr Salāh. Therefore, the verse commands the performance of all five Salāh.

"...as well as the Fajr Salāh." Allāh commands that this Salāh also be established. The Salāh of Fajr is termed as the "Qur'ān of Fajr" because the longest recitation of Qur'ān takes place in this Salāh compared to the other obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāhs. The recitation in this Salāh is also audible.

"Indeed the Fajr Salāh is attended." Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم explained this verse to mean that the angels of the day and the angels of the night attend this Salāh.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the angels of the day and the night alternate each day. They all gather during the time of the Fajr and Asr Salāhs; When the angels who were with man during the night ascend to Allāh, He asks them (despite possessing more knowledge than them) in what condition they had left His slaves. They reply that they left them while they were performing Salāh and they found them the day before while performing Salāh. [*Bukhari v. 1 p.79*]

Although Fajr and Asr are times when the angels are present, only Fajr has been mentioned to lend emphasis to its performance. The verse encourages people to sacrifice their sleep to be present with the angels.

"In a portion of the night peform the Salāh of Tahajjud that is extra for you." The literal meaning of the word *"Tahajjud"* is to leave one's sleep after a while. Performing any act of worship during the night holds extreme virtue, even if it may be performed before sleeping.

Sayyidina Thaubān رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that remaining awake is undoubtedly difficult and hard for the soul. Therefore, a person should try to perform two rakāhs after the Witr when this is performed at the beginning of the night. It will be best if the person woke up later to perform Salāh. However, if he could not, the two rakāhs (after the Witr) will count as Tahajjud. [*"Mishkāt" p. 113*]

The performance of Tahajjud was the regular habit of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. At times he would awaken several times during the night to perform the Tahajjud. The verse addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and mentions that the Tahajjud Salāh is *"extra"* for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, some Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that it was obligatory *(Fardh)* only for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They maintain that the word "extra" means that it was an additional Salāh over and above the normal five Salāh that are incumbent for the rest of the Ummah.

Other Scholars *(Ulama)* state that the verse addressed the entire Ummah, although the mode of address seems specific to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is noticed in numerous other verses. They say that the Tahajjud Salāh was initially obligatory *(Fardh)* for the entire Ummah and was later made mandatory *(Nafl)* for all except the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. According to many, this compulsion remained upon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until his death. However, many also say that the compulsion was lifted from him as well.

Whatever the case, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was always particular about this Salāh and greatly encouraged the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم as well.

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضی الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "Remain steadfast upon performing Salāh at night because it was the habit of the pious people before you. It is a means of gaining proximity to Allāh, an expiation for sins and a deterrent from sin." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that Allāh loved the Salāh and fasting of Sayyidina Dawūd علیه السلام the most. He would sleep for the first half of the night, and then awaken for Salāh during the next third of the night. Thereafter, he would go back to sleep for the remaining sixth of the night. He would also fast on every alternate day [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Mughiera رضی الله عنه narrated that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم would exert himself so much in his nightly worship that his feet used to swell. When he was asked why he exerted himself so when all his past and future sins were forgiven, he would reply, "Should I then not be a grateful servant?" [*Bukhari p. 102*]

Sayyidina Amr bin Abasa رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that a person draws closest to Allāh during the last portion of the night. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم then advised that if one is able to, one should be of those who remember Allāh during that time of the night. [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Umamah رضی الله عنه narrates that someone asked the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم which prayers *(du'ā's)* were most acceptable to Allāh. The Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم replied that these were those prayers *(du'ā's)* that were made during the last portion of the night and after the obligatory *(Fardh)* Salāh. [*"Mishkāt" p. 111*]

Sayyidina Abu Mālik Ash'ari رضی الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم that there are such balconies in Heaven *(Jannah)*, the inside of which can be seen from outside and vice versa. These have been reserved for those people who speak gently, feed others, fast continuously and perform Salāh when others are asleep. [*Bayhaqi*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم used to perform thirteen rakāhs of Salāh every night including the Compulsory Salāh. [*Muslim*]

Allāh says in Surah Dhāriyāt, *"Verily the abstinent ones shall be in gardens and springs receiving what their Lord confers to them. Indeed these people used to carry out good deeds before. Little was it that they slept at night and during the closing portions of the night they would be seeking forgiveness (from Allāh)." [Surah 51, verses 15-18]*

Allāh also says in Surah Alif Lām Mīm Sajdah, *"Their sides part from their beds, they supplicate to their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend from what We have provided for them."* [*Surah 32, verse 16*]

Note: Sayyidah Ayshah رضی الله عنها and Sayyidina Umar رضی الله عنه both reported that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "If a person ever missed any of his nightly devotions (because of illness or any other reason), and he performed it between the Fajr and Zuhr Salāh, it would be as if he had performed them during the night." [*Muslim*]

Note: If a person strongly feels that he will awaken at night for Tahajjud,

he should leave the Witr for then. However, if he feels that he may not awaken, he should perform it during the early part of the night. Devil *(Shaytān)* and the carnal self will never allow a person to wake up for Tahajjud Salāh if he does not resolve to do so before sleeping.

Note: The verse promises lofty stages for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم since he was innocent of any sins. As for the Ummah, the Tahajjud will serve to secure forgiveness for the sins that inundate them. It also amends the deficiencies in their obligations *(Farāidh)*. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

"Soon your Lord will accord to you the 'Maqām Mahmūd." This part of the verse consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by informing him that he will have to endure only a few more days in this world with the difficulties of the disbelievers *(kuffār)*. Soon he will be leaving for such a position, the *"Maqām Mahmūd,"* which is the envy of the entire creation.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that, on the Day of Judgement, people will run to all the Prophets عليهم السلام pleading with them to intercede before Allāh for the reckoning to commence. However, they will all refuse. Eventually, when they ask the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he will intercede for them all. This is the station called the *'Maqām Mahmūd."* [*Bukhari p.686*]

The details of this narration is that people will be in terrible suffering on the Day of Judgement. The sun will be scorching them overhead and they will first run to Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, pleading with him to intercede on their behalf before Allāh to commence the reckoning. When he will refuse, them, they will run to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, then to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, then to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, then to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Finally they will reach the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He will accede to the request and prostrate beneath Allāh's throne. Allāh will then inspire him to praise Him in such a way that has never crossed the heart. Allāh will then tell the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Raise your head. Ask and your request will be fulfilled. Intercede and your intercession will be accepted." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم interpreted the verse *"Soon your Lord will accord to you the 'Maqām Mahmūd,"* as the intercession. [*Tirmidhi*]

Although Allāh has promised the "Maqām Mahmūd" to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Ummah has been requested to make prayer (du'ā) that Allāh confers this to him. This prayer (du'ā) is included in the prayer (du'ā) that is usually recited after the adhān.

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَدْخِلْنِى مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَأَخْرِجْنِى مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَٱجْعَل لِّى مِن لَّدُنكَ سُلْطَٰنًا
نَّصِيرًا (80) وَقُلْ جَآءَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ إِنَّ ٱلْبَٰطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا (81) وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ
ٱلْقُرْءَانِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا (82) وَإِذَآ

أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَا بِجَانِبِهِ ۖ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ كَانَ يَئُوسًا ﴿٨٣﴾ قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ
عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

(80) Say, "O my Lord! Allow me to enter a pleasant place, allow me to leave pleasantly, and grant me such authority from Yourself that is coupled with assistance." (81) Say, "The truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished. In deed, falsehood was bound to disappear." (82) We have revealed such a Qur'ān that is a cure and mercy for mankind. It only increases the loss of the oppressors. (83) When We bestow favours upon man, he turns away and, changing direction, goes far. And when an adversity afflicts him, he becomes despondent. (84) Say, "Every person practises in his own way. Your Lord knows best who is the most rightly guided."

THE QUR'ĀN IS A CURE AND MERCY FOR THE BELIEVERS BUT INCREASES THE LOSS OF THE DISBELIEVERS *(KUFFĀR)*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that the first of the above verses was revealed when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was commanded to make the migration *(Hijrah)*. Allāh advised His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say, 'O my Lord! Allow me to enter a pleasant place* (Madinah), *allow me to leave pleasantly* (from Makkah), *and grant me such authority from Yourself that is coupled with assistance."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that, when Makkah was conquered, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم broke all the idols in the Ka'ba while reciting the verse, *"Say, 'The truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished. Indeed, falsehood was bound to disappear.'"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was also reciting the verse, *"Say, 'The truth has arrived and falsehood shall not show it's face, nor make a return. "'* [*Bukhari p.686*]

Thereafter Allāh says, *"We have revealed such a Qur'ān that is a cure and mercy for mankind. It only increases the loss of the oppressors."* The disbelievers *(kuffār)* have destroyed themselves and prepared their own places in Hell by obstinately rejecting the truth. This is the meaning of their *"loss."* Their rejection of every verse of the Qur'ān plunged them further into destruction.

Allāh then describes the ingratitude of man. He says, *"When We bestow favours upon man, he* turns *away and, changing direction, goes far. And* (on the other hand) *when an adversity afflicts him, he becomes despondent."*

Allāh says in verses 9, 10 and 11 of Surah Hūd (*Surah 11*), *"Undoubtedly, if We allow man to taste of Our mercy and then snatch it away from him, he will certainly be despondent and ungrateful. Undoubtedly, if We allow him to taste of any bounty after an adversity has afflicted him, he will certainly say, 'All difficulties have left me!' Indeed he then becomes boastful and arrogant. Except those who adopt patience and do good deeds. For them shall be forgiveness and an immense reward."*

Allāh then says, *"Say, 'Every person practises in his own way."* Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has quoted numerous interpretations of this verse and states in the end that it basically means that every person acts in a way that is suited to his

temperament and in conformity with the traits and habits that he is accustomed to. He says that this verse is therefore a praise for the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and a slur to the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, who act according to their despicable traits. On the other hand, the believers *(Mu'minīn)* act according to the religion *(D'īn)* and will be rewarded for this in the Hereafter.

"Your Lord knows best who is the most rightly guided." Allāh knows how every person behaves in this world and will grant them their rewards or punishment.

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلرُّوحِ قُلِ ٱلرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّى وَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّنَ ٱلْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

(85) They ask you about the soul. Say, "It is from the command of my Lord." You have been granted only a bit of knowledge.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم REPLIES TO THE JEWS WHO ASK ABOUT THE SOUL

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that he was once walking with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the fields while he was using a date branch as a walking stick. A group of Jews passed by and each told the other to ask the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about the soul. They all then sat down to consult whether they should pose the question because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم might give them a reply that they would not like.

Finally they decided to ask the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not reply, but remained silent. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that he anticipated that revelation was being sent to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he also remained where he was. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the above verse to them. [*Bukhari p.44 and 686*]

Tirmidhi reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Quraysh asked the Jews for a question that they could pose to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by which his Prophethood can be verified. They advised that he be asked about the soul. When they asked this question, the above verse was revealed.

Both these narrations prove that the Jews prompted the question. They wanted to know the nature of the soul which causes man to die when it leaves his body. The verses of the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth tell us a great deal about the soul.

According to a narration of Bukhari, all the souls are initially gathered at a place called the "Ālam Arwāh" where they recognise each other. Allāh says about Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, *"When I completed him* (his mould), *and blown My spirit* (the soul) *into him..."* [*Surah Hijr (15), verse 29*]

Bukhari and Muslim report that the soul of a child is instilled while it is still in its mother's womb. When a person dies, the angel of death extracts the soul. It is then taken to the heavens and later returned to the grave for questioning. [*"Mishkāt" p. 141*] After the stay in the grave, the souls are restored to their bodies and presented before Allāh on the Day of Judgement.

Allāh says, *"They ask you about the soul. Say, 'It is from the command of my Lord."* Allāh does not disclose the reality of the soul in this verse because it does not affect a person's life as a believer *(Mu'min)* to know exactly what the soul is. The verse does, however, confirm that the soul is one of the creations of Allāh. This refutes the theory of the early philosophers who believed that the soul is everlasting (without a beginning) and has no creator.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has written that Allāh has not disclosed the reality of the soul to make man realise that since he is incapable of perceiving his own reality, how can he possibly hope to perceive the true reality of Allāh?

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه has quoted many definitions of the soul in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl", but finally says that the truth of the matter is best understood by Allāh. He says that this is the belief of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah.

"You have been granted only a bit of knowledge." This part of the verse is addressed to all mankind Sayyidina Ibn Jurayj رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that all of mankind, including the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is addressed here. Although the knowledge of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is greater than that of all mankind, even his knowledge is still extremely limited compared to that of Allāh.

"Durrul Manthūr" reports that when the Jews heard the verse *"You have been granted only a bit of knowledge," they* said that they possessed the knowledge of the Torah, which contains everything. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that all that knowledge was extremely little compared to Allāh's knowledge. It was then that Allāh revealed the verse of Surah Luqmān, where He says, *"If all the* trees on earth were pens and the ocean was augmented by seven *oceans (as ink), Allāh's words will never be exhausted. Verily Allāh is Mighty, the Wise."* [*Surah 31, verse 27*]

وَلَئِن شِئْنَا لَنَذْهَبَنَّ بِالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا وَكِيلًا ﴿٨٦﴾ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ إِنَّ فَضْلَهُ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ كَبِيرًا ﴿٨٧﴾ قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَىٰ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٨٩﴾

(86) f We wish, We could certainly snatch away whatever We have revealed to you, where after you will not find a helper against Us... (87) .... except with the mercy of your Lord. Indeed His grace upon you has been tremendous. (88) Say, "If mankind and the Jinn combine to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they would not be able to produce it's example even if they are assistants to each other." (89) Verily We have fully expounded every type of subject matter to mankind in this Qur'ān. However, most people have chosen not to accept.

EVEN IF ALL OF MANKIND AND JINN COMBINE TO PRODUCE THE LIKE OF THE QUR'AAN, THEY WILL FAIL

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that the revelation that he has received is a bounty from Allāh. Only Allāh sent it and He will ensure that it remains forever. Allāh says, *"If We wish, We could certainly snatch away whatever We have revealed to you, where after you will not find a helper against Us, except with the mercy of your Lord."*

"Indeed His grace upon you has been tremendous. "Allāh has made the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم the leader of creation and will bestow the noble station called the *"Maqām Mahmūd"* exclusively to him. Allāh also granted him the glorious Qur'ān and a perpetual Shari'ah and made him the seal of the Holy Prophets with the largest Ummah.

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم in Surah Nisā, *"Allāh has revealed to you the Book and wisdom and taught you what you knew not. The grace of Allāh upon you has been tremendous indeed."* [*Surah 4, verse 113*]

Thereafter Allāh says, *"Say, 'If mankind and the Jinn combine to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they would not be able to produce its example even if they are assistants to each other."* The Qur'ān is a miracle of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that will exist until judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. It been bestowed to him because his Ummah will also be existing until judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. It is miraculous in its composition, eloquence, style and in so many innumerable ways.

The Qur'ān has challenged mankind since its revelation, but none has since been able to meet the challenge to reproduce even a single Surah like it. The tragedy of the situation is that people refuse to accept it even after being convinced of its miraculous nature. Allāh says, *"Do they not ponder over the Qur'ān or are there locks upon their hearts?"* [*Surah Muhammad* صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم *(Surah 47), verse 24*]

"Verily We have fully expounded every type of subject matter to mankind in this Qur'ān." The Qur'ān contains laws, similitude's, advice, admonitions, narratives and verses about various matters covering every aspect of man's life. *"However, most people have chosen not to accept."*

وَقَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ يَنۢبُوعًا ﴿٩٠﴾ أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّن
نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّرَ ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرَ خِلَـٰلَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٩١﴾ أَوْ تُسْقِطَ ٱلسَّمَآءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ
عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا أَوْ تَأْتِىَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةِ قَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾ أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّن زُخْرُفٍ أَوْ
تَرْقَىٰ فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَلَن نُّؤْمِنَ لِرُقِيِّكَ حَتَّىٰ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَـٰبًا نَّقْرَؤُهُۥ ۗ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّى هَلْ
كُنتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٣﴾

(90) They say, "We shall never believe in you until you cause a spring to gush forth for us from the earth... (91) "Or you have a special orchard of dates and grapes, amid which you cause many rivers to flow." (92) "Or you drop the sky

upon us in fragments as you claim, or you bring angels before us." (93) "Or you have a house of gold or you ascend to the sky. And we will never be convinced of your ascension until you send to us a book that we can read." Say, "My Lord is Pure! I am but a human and a messenger."

THE OBSTINACY OF THE QURAYSH AND THEIR ABSURD DEMANDS

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began to invite the Quraysh to Islām, they became his enemy and refused to accept his preaching. They raised numerous objections and made all types of absurd requests. Some of these have been mentioned in the above verses.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that some individuals of the Quraysh approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and told him that if he desired wealth by preaching, they would give him enough wealth to make him the richest person. They proposed to make him their king if he desired position or sovereignty. They told him that if he were insane, they were prepared to spend all their money to seek a cure for him.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that none of the above were true. He told them, "Allāh has sent me as a messenger to you and granted me a Book. I have been charged with the task of conveying to you the glad tidings of accepting and warn you of the consequences of rejecting. I have conveyed the message to you and explained to you with care. If you accept, then you will attain the fortune of both worlds, and if you reject, I shall be patient until Allah decides between us.

They then said that he should ask Allāh to remove the mountains in Makkah that cause their cultivating land to be restricted. They also requested that he make rivers to flow like the rivers of Iraq and Syria. They even added that their forefāthers, including a certain Qusay bin Kilāb, be raised from the dead so that they may attest to the veracity of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They said that if the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم complied with their requests, only then would they follow him.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told them that this was not his task. He told them that they should accept if they wished to, otherwise he would wait for Allāh to pass the decision of punishment against them.

They then submitted that if this proposal was not acceptable, he should request Allāh to send an angel or confer upon him orchards, palatial homes and treasures of gold and silver. In this way, they said, he would be distinguished from them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم again told them that this was not his task. He told them that he was sent as only as a warner.

They then proposed that he cause a piece of the sky to fall on them. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم responded by telling them that this was in Allāh's control and that Allāh would do so if and when He pleased.

Thereupon one of them said that they would believe in him only when he presented Allāh and His angels to them. After this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم rose to leave. As he did so, the son of his paternal aunt [Ātiqa bint Abdil

Muttalib رضی الله عنه], whose name was Abdullāh bin Abi Umayyah, said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Your people have proposed many things to you, but you have refused all of them. Why don't you take a ladder and climb to the heavens before me to bring a written book to us. There should also be an angel with you to confirm your veracity. If you do so, I shall believe in you."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was very grieved over the matter and Allāh revealed the above verses, instructing him to reply to them by saying, *"My Lord is Pure! I am but a human and a messenger."*

There is no reason why a messenger of Allāh should not be a human like the others and fulfil the necessary requirements of living in this world. His responsibility was to convey Allāh's message to the people.

Note: There is a group of people present today who, out of excessive love for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم make such claims that contradict the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth. One of their beliefs is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not a human.

They make the absurd claim that the above verse *(viz. 'My Lord is Pure! I am but a human and a messenger")* is a negative verse. They therefore translate it as "I am not a human". This they say because they do not understand Arabic. Besides this verse, there are other verses also that prove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a human.

وَمَا مَنَعَ ٱلنَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوٓا۟ إِذْ جَآءَهُمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰٓ إِلَّآ أَن قَالُوٓا۟ أَبَعَثَ ٱللَّهُ بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٤﴾ قُل لَّوْ كَانَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مَلَٰٓئِكَةٌ يَمْشُونَ مُطْمَئِنِّينَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَلَكًا رَّسُولًا ﴿٩٥﴾ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ شَهِيدًۢا بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِۦ خَبِيرًۢا بَصِيرًا ﴿٩٦﴾

(94) The only factor that prevented people from believing when guidance came to them was that they said, "Has Allāh sent a human as a messenger?" (95) Say, "If there were angels walking peacefully on earth, We would have sent to them an angel from the skies as a messenger. (96) Say, "Allāh suffices as Witness between us. Verily He is Informed and Watchful of His slaves."

PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE BECAUSE THEY DO NOT ACCEPT THAT A HUMAN CAN BE A MESSENGER

Allāh has mentioned in Surah Ibrahīm that, when people refused to accept the message of the Prophets عليهم السلام, they said, *"You are but mere humans like ourselves"* They refused to accept that a human could be a Prophet. The same was said to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh replies to them in the above verse by saying that a human was sent as a messenger because the people on earth were all humans themselves.

Allāh tells them, *"If there were angels walking peacefully on earth, We would have sent to them an angel from the skies as a messenger."* Man can derive maximum

benefit from another man, as opposed to any other species, because this is the system of the world.

"Say, 'Allāh suffices as Witness between us." The disbelief of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will have no impact upon the truth of the message. It will only affect the disbelievers *(kuffār)* themselves, because *"Verily He is Informed and Watchful of His slaves."* Allāh will punish people for their sins and disbelief *(kufr)*.

وَمَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَهُوَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِ ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِهِۦ ۖ وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ
يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمْيًا وَبُكْمًا وَصُمًّا ۖ مَّأْوَىٰهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَٰهُمْ
سَعِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَقَالُوٓا۟ أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَٰمًا وَرُفَٰتًا أَءِنَّا
لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ﴿٩٨﴾ ۞ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا۟ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰٓ أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجَلًا لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَأَبَى ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِلَّا كُفُورًا
﴿٩٩﴾

(97) He is rightly guided whom Allāh guides. You shall never find any allies besides Allāh for those whom He sends astray. We shall raise them on their faces on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), blind, dumb and deaf. Their abode shall be Hell. Each time it abates, We will increase its intensity. (98) This is their punishment because they denied Our verses and said, "Will we be resurrected as a new creation when we have become bones and fragments?" (99) Do they not see that the same Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth is capable of creating the likes of them, and He has appointed for them a term in which there is no doubt. The oppressors have only rejected.

THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

Allāh says, *"He is rightly guided whom Allāh guides."* No person can be rightly guided without guidance from Allāh. On the other hand, *"You shall never find any allies besides Allāh for those whom He sends astray. We shall raise them on their faces on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah), blind, dumb and deaf"* This will be their condition when they are raised initially. Thereafter, their senses will be restored when the need arises.

Allāh describes their plight further when He says, *"Their abode shall be Hell (Jahannam) Each time it abates, We will increase its intensity."*

"This is their punishment because they denied Our verses and said, 'Will we be resurrected as a new creation when we have become bones and fragments?'" They will be severely punished because they reject the resurrection, as if Allāh is not capable of accomplishing it. Therefore Allāh says, *"Do they not see that the same Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth is capable of creating the likes of them..."* Allāh has created these great things from nothing. Resurrection will entail only raising bodies that already have souls. Allāh has ample power to do this.

"....and He has appointed for them a term in which there is no doubt." i.e. The time of judgment *(Qiyāmah)* has been fixed by Allāh and it will definitely take place. It will not take place earlier because of peoples' rejection, nor will it be postponed. However, some people are still obstinate, as Allāh says, *"The oppressors have only rejected."*

قُل لَّوْ أَنتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَآئِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّىٓ إِذًا لَّأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ ٱلْإِنفَاقِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ قَتُورًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

(100) Say, "If you people were in control of the treasures of my Lord's mercy, you would hold back for fear of spending. Man was ever miserly."

IF PEOPLE COULD CONTROL ALLĀH'S TREASURES OF MERCY, THEY WOULD BE AFRAID TO SPEND OF IT

Allāh tells man that he would be extremely miserly if he were given control over Allāh's treasures. However, Allāh has cared for the entire creation from their inception and will continue to do so without stint and restraint. There is no depletion in His favours even though the creation continues to increase. He fulfils the needs of all his creation, even though some of them may be enemies to Him.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "How much has Allāh not spent since He created the heavens and the earth? However, nothing has been depleted from his treasures." [*"Mishkāt" p. 21*]

"Man was ever miserly." This is his nature. This part of the verse also serves as a reply to the request of the polytheists, when they asked that Makkah be made fertile and that rivers run there. They believed that this would alleviate their poverty. Allāh tells them that even if they were to be affluent, they would still remain miserly.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ تِسْعَ ءَايَٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَٰتٍ ۖ فَسْـَٔلْ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِذْ جَآءَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُۥ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّى لَأَظُنُّكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ مَسْحُورًا ﴿١٠١﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَآ أَنزَلَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ بَصَآئِرَ وَإِنِّى لَأَظُنُّكَ يَٰفِرْعَوْنُ مَثْبُورًا ﴿١٠٢﴾ فَأَرَادَ أَن يَسْتَفِزَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ فَأَغْرَقْنَٰهُ وَمَن مَّعَهُۥ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ وَقُلْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ لِبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱسْكُنُوا۟ ٱلْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ جِئْنَا بِكُمْ لَفِيفًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

(101) Indeed We granted Mūsa nine clear signs, so ask the Bani Isrā'īl when he came to them and Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said to him, "O Mūsa! I really think that you are bewitched." (102) He replied, "You know very well that only the Lord of the heavens and the earth revealed these as eye-openers. And, O Pharaoh (Fir'aun), I really think that you will be destroyed." (103) So he intended to annihilate them

from the face of the earth, but We drowned him and all those with him. (104) Thereafter, We told the Bani Isra'īl, "Live in the land. When the promise of the Hereafter comes, We shall gather you all for presentation."

ALLĀH GAVE SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام NINE CLEAR SIGNS, DROWNED PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS ACCOMPLICES AND COMMANDED THE BANI ISRA'ĪL TO SETTLE IN THE LAND

At the beginning of this Surah *(verse 7)* Allāh told the Bani Isra'īl, *"If you do good, you will be doing good for yourselves and if you do evil it will be to your detriment."* Thereafter Allāh discussed many beliefs and refutations of the polytheists. There were also many prohibitions and command in the other verses. Now, towards the close of the Surah, Allāh again speaks of the Bani Isra'īl. In it are lessons for all.

Allāh sent Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to preach to the Bani Isra'īl, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his people. The Bani Isra'īl suffered for centuries at the hands of the Egyptian Copts. Eventually, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام secured their release from Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* after much difficulty. The entire episode was discussed from verse 103 to verse 157 of Surah A'rāf *(Surah 7)*, and will be repeated in verses 9 to 99 of Surah TāHā *(Surah 20)*.

Allāh says, *"Indeed We granted Mūsa nine clear signs, so ask the Bani Isra'īl when he came to them and Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said to him, 'O Mūsa! I really think that you are bewitched.'"* "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" has reported the interpretation of Muhammad bin Jarīr رحمة الله عليه that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that he was an expert magician.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام courageously replied by saying, *"You know very well that only the Lord of the heavens and the earth revealed these as eye-openers. And, O Pharaoh (Fir'aun), I really think that you will be destroyed."*

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* did not allow the Bani Isra'īl to leave Egypt, but when he noticed that the strength of the Bani Isra'īl was quickly multiplying under the leadership of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, he decided that they should be dealt with. Allāh says, *"So he intended to annihilate them from the face of the earth..."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that this means that he wished to kill all of them.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* told his courtiers, *"Now we shall slay their sons and allow their daughters to live. We still have power over them."* [*Surah 7, verse 127*]

Another interpretation of the verses is that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* wished to exile the Bani Isra'īl from Egypt, but this interpretation does not seem very accurate because, if it were true, they would not have left Egypt stealthily by night. Whatever the interpretation, the fact of the matter is that Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* plan was foiled and, Allāh says, *"but We drowned him and all those with him."*

"Thereafter, We told the Bani Isrā'īl, 'Live in the land." *i.e.* the lands of Shām and Egypt, whichever they preferred. They chose to live in Palestine (in Shām), but entered the area only forty years later because of their disobedience to Allāh, as was mentioned in the commentaries of Surah Baqarah and Surah Mā'idah. [*Qurtubi*]

"When the promise of the Hereafter comes, We shall gather you all for presentation." All people will be raised from their graves on the Day of Judgement as one body. Certain commentators have mentioned in the interpretation of this verse that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* will try to hide themselves by joining the ranks of the believer *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh will then announce, *"Separate yourselves today, O you criminals!"* [*Surah Yāsīn (36), verse 59*].

Note: The *"nine signs"* mentioned refer to nine miracles of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. These were: (1) The staff. (2) The glowing hand. (3) The splitting of the sea for the Bani Isra'īl to pass through. (4) The drought that afflicted the Copts. (5) The depletion of crops for the Copts. (6) The punishment of locusts, (7) ticks and (8) frogs that afflicted them. (9) The punishment of blood that contaminated all their utensils and water.

In place of the above, some commentators have mentioned the other miracles of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, like the flowing of water from a rock and the descent of Manna and Salwa from the skies.

وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَٰكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿105﴾ وَقُرْءَانًا فَرَقْنَٰهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُۥ عَلَى
النَّاسِ عَلَىٰ مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَٰهُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿106﴾ قُلْ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِهِۦٓ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوٓا۟ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ الْعِلْمَ مِن
قَبْلِهِۦٓ إِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا ﴿107﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَٰنَ رَبِّنَآ إِن كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا
لَمَفْعُولًا ﴿108﴾ وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا ۩ ﴿109﴾

(105) We have revealed it with the truth, and with the truth did it come. We have sent you only as a giver of glad tidings and a warner. (106) We have divided the Qur'ān so that you may recite it steadily to the people and We have revealed it gradually. (107) Say, "Believe it or do not believe. Verily, those who were granted knowledge before this fall prostrate upon their chins when it is recited to them. (108) ....and they say, 'Pure is our Lord! Without doubt, the promise of our Lord will surely come to pass."' (109) They fall weeping on their chins and it increases their humility.

THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED WITH THE TRUTH AND THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK FALL DOWN IN PROSTRATION WHEN THEY HEAR IT

"We have revealed it (the Qur'ān) *with the truth, and with the truth did it come."* The Qur'ān did not undergo any form of transformation, nor was it changed in any way as it passed from Allāh to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم via the agency of Jibr'īl عليه السلام.

Allāh then tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"We have sent you only as a giver of glad tidings and a warner."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم conveyed the glad tidings of Heaven *(Jannah)* to the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and warned the disbelievers *(kuffār)* of their pending doom.

"We have divided the Qur'ān so that you may recite it steadily to the people..." The Qur'ān had been revealed gradually as separate verses and chapters (Surahs). They have also been divided according to subject matter, so that it is easy for people to follow and grasp. If it were continuous, it would be difficult to comprehend and to memorise. Reciting the Qur'ān steadily could also mean to recite it with Tajwīd and slowly.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the meaning of the division of the Qur'ān is that the matters of Lawful *(Halāl)* and unlawful *(Harām)* have been clearly divided and highlighted separately. Other commentators have stated that this means that the truth and falsehood have been clearly divided so that they can be distinctly told apart. The same applies to the commands and prohibitions and the advice and admonitions.

". ..and We have revealed it gradually." "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 15 p.188*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the entire Qur'ān was revealed from the Protected Tablet *(Lawhul Mahfūz)* to the heavens above the earth on the night of Qadr in the month of Ramadhān. It was then kept in the "Baitul Izzah'. Thereafter, it was revealed by Jibr'īl عليه السلام to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم according to necessity over a period of 23 years.

Allāh then instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Say. 'Believe it* (the Qur'ān) *or do not believe."* People should understand that belief in the Qur'ān will benefit them and rejection will be to their own peril. Their rejection will not affect the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, nor will it affect the preservation' of the Qur'ān, nor the spread of Islām.

Allāh continues to say, *"Verily, those who were granted knowledge before this fall prostrate upon their chins when it is recited to them and they say, 'Pure is our Lord! Without doubt, the promise of our Lord will surely come to pass.' They fall weeping on their chins and it (the Qur'ān) increases their humility."* The author of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" says that these verses refer to the true adherents to their faith from the people of the book *(Ahlul Kitāb)*. They were constantly in search for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and, when they heard the Qur'ān, they prostrated to Allāh in gratitude. Examples of these people are Sayyidina Zaid bin Amr bin Nufayl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Salmān Farsi رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported from Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه that these verses refer to those Jews who accepted Islām. In my humble opinion, the reference is to the Ethiopian king, Najashi and his courtiers. With regard to them, the verses of Surah Mā'idah were revealed where Allāh says, *"When they hear what has been revealed to the messenger, you will see their eyes flow with tears because they recognise the truth. They say, 'Our Lord, we believe, so record us among those who testify. How can we not believe in Allāh and the truth that has come to us? We desire that our Lord include us in the ranks of the righteous ones..."* [*Surah* 5, *verse 83-85*]

Falling prostrate on their *"chins"* refers to their faces according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. When a person performs sajdah *(prostration)* correctly, his chin comes close to the ground, because of which it is said that they fall prostrate on their chins.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that every person who has knowledge will be elevated to that rank where the recitation of the Qur'ān will cause him to

increase in humility. Thereafter he will adopt humble manners and qualities. The "Musnad of Dārmi" reports from Abu Muhammad Taymi رحمة الله عليه that the person whose knowledge of religion *(D'īn)* does not cause him to weep is not worthy of that knowledge because that Qur'ān states that this knowledge is supposed to cause a person to prostrate and weep before Allāh.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has also deduced from this verse that crying does not nullify the Salāh. Abu Dawūd (*v. 1 p. 130*) reports from Sayyidina Mutarraf bin Abdillah رحمة الله عليه that his father told him about the sound of a grinding stone that used to emerge from the chest of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he performed Salāh. According to another narration in Nasaī (*v. 1 p. 179*), the sound is described as that of a boiling pot.

Crying out of fear for Allāh is a hallmark of the believers *(Mu'minīn).* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh forbids the fire of Hell from the face of that person who, out of fear for Allāh, wept a tear even the size of a fly's head. [*Ibn Majah*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Two eyes will not be touched by the fire of Hell. One is that eye which wept out of fear for Allāh, and the other is the eye that stayed awake while keeping guard in Allāh's path (Jihād)." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Uqba bin Amir رضى الله عنه reports that he once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what was the way to salvation. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Hold your tongue, make your home your place (do not emerge from it without reason) and weep over your sins." [*"Mishkāt" p. 413*]

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَٰنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١١٠﴾

(110) Say, "Call unto Allāh or call unto Rahmān. By whichever name you call to Him, to Him belongs the most beautiful names. Do not recite very loudly in your Salāh, nor too softly, but seek a path in between these."

WHETHER YOU CALL ALLĀH OR RAHMĀN, TO HIM BELONGS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NAMES, AND RECITE IN A MODERATE VOLUME DURING SALĀH

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 4 p.606*) reports from Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said, "O Allāh!" O Rahmān!" during his prayer (du'ā). Upon hearing this, the polytheists said, "Look at this bringer of a new religion *(D'īn)*! He forbids us from worshipping two gods, but worships two himself." It was on this occasion that the verse was revealed viz. "Say, '*Call unto Allāh* or *call unto Rahmān. By whichever name you call to Him, to Him belongs the most beautiful names.*

Allāh is The One and Only, but can be called by any of His various names. On the other hand, the polytheists called on different gods who were also named differently. Tirmidhi reports that Allāh has 99 names, and these are recorded in

"Mishkāt" p. 199.

Bukhari (*v. 2 p.686*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to secretly lead the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم in Salāh in Makkah, but used to recite very loudly in the' Salāh. When the polytheists used to hear this, they swore at the Qur'ān, the Revealer of the Qur'ān (Allāh) and the one who brought the Qur'ān. For this reason Allāh revealed the verse instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Do not recite very loudly in your Salāh, nor too softly, but seek a path in between these."*

Therefore, the Qur'ān should be recited only so loudly in Salāh so that the followers are able to hear the recitation. Then too, Allāh is able to hear all sounds and does to need a loud voice to be able to listen.

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه reports that once on journey, while the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was ascending a mountain pass, a Sahabi رضى الله عنه was loudly reciting, ***"Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Wallāhu Akbar!"*** Hearing this the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "You are not calling someone who is deaf or absent." Thereafter he turned to Sayyidina Abu Mūsa رضى الله عنه and said, ***'Lā hawla Wa Lā Quwwata Illa Billāh'*** is from the treasures of Heaven *(Jannah).*" [*Bukhari p.949*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once passed by Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه during the night. That morning, he said, "O Abu Bakr! I passed close to you and noticed that you were reciting very softly." Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه replied by saying, "The One with Whom I was whispering heard me." Thereupon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to raise his voice slightly.

Then the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم turned to Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and said, "When I passed by you, I noticed that you were reciting very loudly." He said, "By reciting loudly I intended to awaken those who were asleep and chase devil *(Shaytān)* away." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to lower his voice slightly. [*Tirmidhi*]

وَقُلِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ وَلِىٌّ مِّنَ ٱلذُّلِّ وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيرًا ﴿١١١﴾

(111) Say, "All praise is for Allāh Who has not taken a child, has no partner in sovereignty and is not so weak that He requires an assistant. And declare His greatness in abundance."

EXPRESS THE PRAISE AND GREATNESS OF ALLĀH WHO HAS NO PARTNER AND DOES NOT REQUIRE ANY ASSISTANT

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 4 p.208*) reports from Sayyidina Muhammad bin Ka'b Qurazi رحمة الله عليه that the Jews and Christians attributed children to Allāh and the polytheists used to chant during their hajj, "O Allāh! You have no partner, except those partners whom You control and who have no control themselves." At the same time the Sabians and the Majūsī (fire-worshippers) used to say that Allāh

would be helpless without His assistants. In refutation to all of these, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Say, 'All praise is for Allāh, Who has not taken a child, has no partner in sovereignty and is not so weak that He requires an assistant. And declare His greatness in abundance.'"*

Allāh says in a Hadith, "I am Pure from having a wife and children." Allāh has complete sovereignty over the entire universe and none shares in His authority. He is Omnipotent and Mighty, not needing any assistants at all. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Say, 'Call those whom you worship besides Allāh. They have no control over an atom's weight in the heavens or in the earth. They do not even share any partnership in the two, and none of them are assistants to Allāh."* [*Surah 34, verse 22*]

This verse also instructs that people praise Allāh and hymn His greatness. Ibn Kathir رحمة الله عليه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to teach this verse to young and old in his household. It is also reported in certain narrations that when this verse is recited in any home, it will be secure against theft and all other calamities.

Sayyidina Jābir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The best remembrance of Allāh *(dhikr)* is ***'Lā Ilāha Illallāh'*** and the best supplication *(du'ā)* is ***'Alhamdu Lillah.'"*** [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the first people to be called to Heaven *(Jannah)* will be those who praised Allāh during times of prosperity and adversity.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Praising Allāh is actually showing gratitude to Him. The person who does not praise Allāh has not been grateful to Him." [*Both narrations are from Bayhaqi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "For me to recite ***'Subhā Nallāh Wal Hamdulillāh Wa Lā Ilāha Illallāhu Allāhu Akbar'*** is more beloved than everything on which the sun shines." [*Muslim*]

سورة الكهف

Makkan	Surah Kahf	Verses 110

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَل لَّهُۥ عِوَجَا (1) قَيِّمًا لِّيُنذِرَ بَأْسًا
شَدِيدًا مِّن لَّدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا
حَسَنًا (2) مَّٰكِثِينَ فِيهِ أَبَدًا (3) وَيُنذِرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱللَّهُ وَلَدًا (4) مَّا
لَهُم بِهِۦ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِءَابَآئِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَٰهِهِمْ إِن يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا
كَذِبًا (5)

In the name of Allāh, The Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

(1) All praise be to Allāh, Who has revealed the Book to His slave and has not placed any crookedness in it. (2) He has made the Book upright so as to warn of a severe punishment and to convey glad tidings to the believers who do good works that they shall have a splendid reward... (3)..... in which they will abide forever. (4) And so that it may warn those who say that Allāh has taken a child. (5) Neither they, nor their forefathers have any knowledge. Grave is the statement that emerges from their mouths. They speak only lies.

Surah Kahf comprises of 120 verses, all of which were revealed in Makkah, except verse 28. Some commentators say that even the last few verses (from verse 107 to the end) were revealed in Madinah.

The Surah derives its name from the incident of the people of the "Kahf' (cave), whose story is narrated in the Surah. The Surah also contains the story of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام with Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام and the story of Dhul Qarnain رحمة الله عليه, whose travels to the east and west led him to imprison the barbaric Gog Magog *(Yājūj Mājūj)* tribe behind a wall.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF REVELATION

Commentators mention that the Jews told the polytheists to pose three questions to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The first concerned the reality of the

soul, the second concerned the story of the people of the cave and the third was about the story of Dhul Qarnain. The reply to the first question was discussed in Surah Bani Isra'īl [*Surah 17, verse 85*] and the second two appear in Ṣurah Kahf. By posing these questions they wished to assess the truth about the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, when the replies were favourably received, neither the Jews nor the polytheists accepted Islām.

THE VIRTUE OF RECITING SURAH KAHF

Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who learns the first ten verses of Surah Kahf will be saved from the evil of Dajjāl. [*Muslim v. 1 p.271*]

According to another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Whoever of you encounter Dajjāl should recite the first ten verses of Surah Kahf before him and he will be saved from him." [*Muslim v. 1 p.401*]

Another narration on page 271 of Muslim reports that the last ten verses of this Surah will secure protection against Dajjāl. According to Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه, the last ten verses begin from verse 102 until the end of the Surah.

Sayyidina Abu Saīd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who recites Surah Kahf on a Friday will have a celestial light until the following Friday. This hadith means that his heart will be illuminated for the entire week. According to others, his grave will be illuminated for a week thereafter so that it will be bright for him if he enters it within the week.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported a hadith from Bayhaqi stating that the person who recites Surah Kahf as it was revealed shall have light on the Day of Judgement. He has also reported from the book "Kitābul Mukhtāra" by Diyā'ud Dīn Maqdasi رحمة الله عليه that the person who recites Surah Kahf on a Friday will be saved from all problems for the following eight days. If Dajjāl has to appear within this period, he will be safe from him as well.

This Surah, like Surah Fātiha (1), Surah Ān'ām (6), Surah Saba (34) and Surah Fātir (35), begins with the words *"All praise be to Allāh."* By prompting the polytheists to ask these questions, the Jews intended to disprove that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a Prophet. In this way they would also be falsifying the Qur'ān. It is for this reason that Allāh commenced the Surah with the verse, *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has revealed the Book to His slave and has not placed any crookedness therein."*

This means that there are neither iniquities nor muddling of words in the Qur'ān. There is also no shortage of eloquence in it, nor any discrepancies.

Of the four places in the Qur'ān where it is necessary to pause during recitation, one is after the word "Iwajā" (translated as *"crookedness"*). The Imām of Qirā'ah, Imām Hafs رحمة الله عليه was once passing by a villager who recited the verse in the following manner: "All praise be to Allāh, Who has revealed the Book to His slave and has not placed any crookedness or uprightness in it." He told the person, "How can an upright thing have crookedness?" He then advised the person to pause after the word "Iwajā" so that the recitation does not carry the above obscure meaning.

"He has made the Book upright..." i.e. it is absolutely accurate in every way. Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the Qur'ān does not contain any confusion and bungling of words or meaning. Others have interpreted the verse to mean that the Qur'ān is not immoderately excessive, nor deficient in any way. According to Farra رحمة الله عليه, it means that the Qur'ān confirms all the previous scriptures. Abu Muslim رحمة الله عليه interprets the verse to mean that the Qur'ān undertakes to see to the welfare of man and guides him towards all aspects that will correct and improve his existence.

Thereafter Allāh says that the Qur'ān has been revealed *"so as to warn of a severe punishment and to convey glad tidings to the believers who do good works that they shall have a splendid reward. Therein they will abide forever."*

The Qur'ān was also revealed specifically *"so that it may warn those who say that Allāh has taken a child."* The polytheists said that the angels were Allāh's daughters. The Jews said that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son and the Christians said that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was His son. The Qur'ān serves to admonish these people.

With regard to these people Allāh says, *"Neither they, nor their forefathers have any knowledge."* They were unaware of the truth and merely spoke on the basis of conjecture and misguided speculation.

"Grave is the statement that emerges from their mouths. They speak only lies." Their beliefs are sheer slander and can never be warranted.

Allāh says in Surah Maryam, *"They say, 'Ar Rahmān has taken a child.' You have certainly said a grave thing. The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to smithereens. All this because they ascribed children to Ar Rahmān. It is not befitting of Ar Rahmān to take children. Everything within the heavens and the earth shall come to Ar Rahmān as slaves."* [*Surah 19, verse 88-93*]

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَٰخِعٞ نَّفۡسَكَ عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَٰرِهِمۡ إِن لَّمۡ يُؤۡمِنُواْ بِهَٰذَا ٱلۡحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾ إِنَّا
جَعَلۡنَا مَا عَلَى ٱلۡأَرۡضِ زِينَةٗ لَّهَا لِنَبۡلُوَهُمۡ أَيُّهُمۡ أَحۡسَنُ عَمَلٗا ﴿٧﴾ وَإِنَّا لَجَٰعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيۡهَا
صَعِيدٗا جُرُزًا ﴿٨﴾

(6) It should not be that you destroy yourself after them in grief because they do not believe in this subject. (7) Verily We have placed everything on earth as an adornment so as to test which of them will carry out the best actions. (8) We shall certainly turn everything on earth into an open plain.

ALLĀH CONSOLES THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Despite the various miracles and replies to their innumerable questions, the Jews and the polytheists still adamantly refused to accept. Their disbelief greatly grieved the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh knew that even after listening to the account of the people of Kahf, they would still not believe. Therefore, before

revealing the story of the people of Kahf, Allāh first consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"It should not be that you destroy yourself after them in grief because they do not believe in this subject."* The task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was only to convey the message, not to force people to believe.

"Verily We have placed everything on earth as an adornment so as to test which of them will carry out the best actions." If the world presented no attraction for people, there would not have been any test for them. However, in the engrossment with this world people forget Allāh and they refuse to hearken to the Prophets عليهم السلام because they fear a loss to their worldly possessions and status.

In their involvement with the world, people fail to realise that the pleasures of this world are only temporary and will disappear one day, like flourishing crops that are bound to wilt away in time. Therefore Allāh reminds man, *"We shall certainly turn everything on earth into an open plain."*

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"They ask you about the mountains. Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them [on the Day of judgment (Qiyāmah)], leaving the earth as a barren plain on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions.'"* [*Surah 20, verses 105-107*]

أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْكَهْفِ وَٱلرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا۟ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴿9﴾ إِذْ أَوَى
ٱلْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى ٱلْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَآ ءَاتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴿10﴾
فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ فِى ٱلْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴿11﴾ ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَٰهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَىُّ ٱلْحِزْبَيْنِ
أَحْصَىٰ لِمَا لَبِثُوٓا۟ أَمَدًا ﴿12﴾

(9) Did you think that the people of the cave and the Raqīm were wonders from Our signs? (10) When the youths took refuge in the cave saying, "O our Lord! Bestow on us mercy especially from Yourself and facilitate a suitable solution for us to our plight." (11) So We cast a veil upon their ears for many years in the cave. (12) Thereafter We raised them so that We may know which of the two groups will be able to specify correctly for how long they had remained (in the cave).

WHO WERE "THE PEOPLE OF THE KAHF AND THE RAQĪM"?

The verse refers to a few youths who hid in a cave to escape the persecution of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and their king. According to Sayyidina Anas رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Sha'bi رحمة الله عليه, *"Raqīm"* was the name of their dog, while Sayyidina Saīd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه says that *"Raqīm"* was the stone tablet on which the incident of these people was engraved. This was hung at the mouth of their cave.

According to one narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, the *"Raqīm"* was a book containing some facts about the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also mentioned that this was the name of a valley between Īla and Palestine in which the cave is situated.

Once, when Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه was asked about the *"Raqīm,"* he said that he was not certain. Thereafter he said that he had heard from Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه [a former Jewish Rabbi *(Lord)*! who accepted Islām during the time of the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم] that this was the name of the town from which the people of the cave came.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 15 p.409*) writes that all these narrations confirm that the *"people of the cave"* and the people of the *"Raqīm"* refer the same group. Although certain commentators have stated that these were two different groups, there are no Ahadīth to substantiate their claim. Allāh knows best.

THE ERA OF THE PEOPLE OF THE CAVE

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has written in "Al Bidāya wan Nihāyah" (v. 2 p. 114) that these people were the children of kings and lived during the period of a king called Digyanūs. They once happened to join the masses during a celebration and noticed that the people prostrated to idols and revered them deeply. Allāh opened their hearts and guided them to realise that this practice was incorrect. They then decided to leave the people because they would not be allowed to adhere to their belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. They sought refuge in a cave with a dog who guarded the entrance.

Allāh firstly dispels the surprise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying, *"Did you think that the people of the cave and the Raqīm were wonders from Our signs?"* This is hardly as astonishing as the other greater signs of Allāh, like the creation of the heavens, the earth and the multitude of other things that Allāh created from nothing. The only thing that happened with the people of the cave was that they were put to sleep for an extensive period without their bodies decaying. The disbelievers *(kuffār)* were astonished with this incident, yet they failed to perceive the wondrous nature of Allāh's other creation.

THEY ENTER THE CAVE

Allāh says that the time should be brought to mind "When the youths took refuge in the cave saying, "O *our Lord! Bestow on us mercy especially from Yourself and facilitate a suitable solution for us to our plight."* Allāh is Capable of protecting people wherever on earth they may, in a crowd, alone, on a mountain, at sea, in a cave, etc. The youths made this du'ā because they were apprehensive of the persecution of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* who dominated the area.

In reply to their supplication *(du'ā)*, Allāh says, "So We cast a veil upon their *ears for many years in the cave."* Allāh caused them to sleep soundly in the cave for a long time. When they awoke they began to question each other about the period that they spent asleep in the cave. Allāh says, *"Thereafter We raised them so that We may know which of the* two *groups will be able to specify correctly for how long they had remained (in the cave)."*

Commentators mention that the first group refers to those of them who questioned the time they spent in the cave. The second group was those who did not delve into the matter and said, *"Your Lord knows best how long you stayed."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the one group

was the people of the cave and the other group was that of the kings who successively ascended to the throne during the period that the youths slept. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 15 p.212*]

Although sleeping is related to the shutting of the eyes, Allāh speaks of their ears being veiled so as to denote that their sleep was so deep that they could not even hear anything.

نَّحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَٰهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾
وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ إِذْ قَامُوا فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَّدْعُوَا مِن دُونِهِۦ
إِلَٰهًا لَّقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا ﴿١٤﴾ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً لَّوْلَا يَأْتُونَ
عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطَٰنٍ بَيِّنٍ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿١٥﴾ وَإِذِ اعْتَزَلْتُمُوهُمْ
وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُۥٓا إِلَى الْكَهْفِ يَنشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُم مِّن رَّحْمَتِهِۦ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُم
مِّنْ أَمْرِكُم مِّرْفَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

(13) We narrate to you their story in perfect truth. They were a few youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance. (14) We consolidated their hearts when they stood up and said, "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never accept another as deity besides Him, for then we will have definitely uttered sheer transgression. (15) "These are our people who have taken others as gods besides Him. Why do they not present a clear proof for it? Who can be more unjust than he who invents a lie against Allāh?" (16) "When you have separated yourselves from them and the gods that they worship besides Allāh, then seek refuge in the cave. Then your Lord shall shower His mercy upon you and make your objectives easy to reach."

THE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE CAVE

The people during the period of the "Ashābul Kahf" (people of the cave) were all polytheists and their king (Digyanūs) used to force people to worship idols. When the "As'hābul Kahf" noticed their people worshipping idols during their celebrations, they disapproved of these practices and left. Although they were all strangers to each other and were observing the scene separately, Allāh made all of them gather at a certain point.

As they were all unaware of each other's beliefs, they were apprehensive to say anything. However, one of them said that each one should express why he had left the people. Someone got up and said that he found the actions of the people despicable. He said that he was disgusted at how they worshipped idols when Allāh, the Lord of the heavens and the earth was the Only One worthy of worship. Eventually all of them said the same thing and they forged a true bond of brotherhood.

They then built their own premises to worship Allāh. When the people

reported the incident to the king, he summoned them and asked them what their beliefs were. Allāh strengthened their hearts and they expressed their belief in oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* without fear. They also invited the king to conform to their beliefs. Allāh says, *"We consolidated their hearts when they stood up and* said (to the king), *'Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We will never accept another as deity besides Him, for then we will have definitely uttered sheer transgression."*

However, the king refused to accept what they said and had them stripped of their fine clothes. He then allowed them grace to reconsider their stand and warned them of the severe consequences should they not change their beliefs.

THEY ESCAPE FROM THE KING AND THEIR PEOPLE

Among themselves they discussed, *"These are our people who have taken others as gods besides Him. Why do they not present a clear proof for it?"* They realised that there can never be any reason for polytheism *(shirk)* and said, *"Who can be more unjust than he who invents a lie against Allāh?"*

They then resolved to leave the town and to take refuge in a cave. So they told each other, *"When you have separated yourselves from them and the gods that they worship besides Allāh, then seek refuge in the cave."*

They required provisions for their stay in the cave and pinned their trust in Allāh saying, *"Then your Lord shall shower His mercy upon you and make your objectives easy to reach."* With this conviction they proceeded to the cave.

وَتَرَى ٱلشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَت تَّزَٰوَرُ عَن كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَت تَّقْرِضُهُمْ
ذَاتَ ٱلشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِى فَجْوَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ مَن يَهْدِ ٱللَّهُ فَهُوَ ٱلْمُهْتَدِ ۖ
وَمَن يُضْلِلْ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ وَلِيًّا مُّرْشِدًا ﴿١٧﴾ وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ ۚ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ
ذَاتَ ٱلْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ ٱلشِّمَالِ ۖ وَكَلْبُهُم بَٰسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِٱلْوَصِيدِ ۚ لَوِ ٱطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعْبًا ﴿١٨﴾

(17) You will see that, when the sun rises, it would pass by their cave on the right and, when it would set, it would pass by on the left, while they were in a spacious portion of the cave. These are from Allāh's signs. The person whom Allāh guides is rightly guided. As for him whom Allāh sends astray, you shall not find for him any guiding friend. (18) You would have deemed them to be awake though they were asleep. And We used to turn them over on their right and left sides, while their dog stretched out his paws at the threshold. If you were to observe them closely, you would surely have turned away and fled from them, and you would have been filled with awe.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE CAVE

These verses describe that the youths slept in a spacious part of the cave and

were not disturbed by the sun. Allāh caused the cave to be positioned in such manner that the rays of the sun never entered the cave. Allāh says, *"You will see that, when the sun rises, it would pass by their cave on the right and, when it would set, it would pass by on the left, while they were in a spacious portion of the cave."*

"These are from Allāh's signs." They relied on Allāh to protect them and care for them, so He made their task comfortable and easy. Their gazes were not on the visible means at their disposal, but on Allāh's treasures. Therefore Allāh ensured their well being.

"The person whom Allāh guides is rightly guided (like the people of the cave). *As for him whom Allāh sends astray* (like the Jews of Madinah and the Polytheists of Makkah), *you shall not find for him any guiding friend."*

"You would have deemed them to be awake though they were asleep." Some commentators say that they slept with their eyes open, while others are of the opinion that there were no signs of sleep on their bodies. Their bodies did not appear relaxed like those of sleeping people.

"And We used to turn them over on their right and left sides..." Because they were asleep for such a long period, Allāh ensured that the earth does not decompose their bodies and so Allāh turned them from side to side as they slept.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 2 p.154*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that they were turned over once a year, while Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه says that they were turned over twice a year. However, these reports are based on narrations from the Bani Isra'īl, since no hadith has been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم concerning this.

"... while their dog stretched out his paws at the threshold." According to certain narrations, the dog joined them as they proceeded to the cave. Others mention that the dog belonged to the king's cook, who was also one of them. Some say that it was the hunting dog belonging to one of them.

Many opinions have been cited in the books of exegesis *(tafsīr)* with regard to the colour of the dog, but none of these are substantiated and it is not even necessary to know about it.

The Arabic word "wasīd" (translated above as *"threshold")* has also been translated as "door," "sand" and "courtyard." [*Ibn Kathīr v. 3 p.76 and "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p.154*]

"If you were to observe them closely, you would surely have turned away and fled from them, and you would have been filled with awe." Some commentators have mentioned that the cave was a frightening place, while others say that one would have been afraid because the youths slept with their eyes open and their hair and nails were extremely long.

Allāh protected them by not allowing the sun to fall on them, by turning their bodies from side to side, by placing the dog on guard and by causing them to appear gruesome so that no person will have the courage to accost them.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَٰهُمْ لِيَتَسَآءَلُوا۟ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا۟ لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا
أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۚ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَٱبْعَثُوٓا۟ أَحَدَكُم بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَٰذِهِۦٓ
إِلَى ٱلْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنظُرْ أَيُّهَآ أَزْكَىٰ طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُم بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا
يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا (19) إِنَّهُمْ إِن يَظْهَرُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ
فِى مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَن تُفْلِحُوٓا۟ إِذًا أَبَدًا (20)

(19) In this manner We raised them so that they could ask each other. One of them said, "How long have you remained?" They replied, "We remained here for a day or a part of a day." Others said, "Your Lord knows best how long you tarried. Dispatch someone to the town with this silver. Let him then see which food is purest so that he can bring you some provisions from there. However, he should be subtle in his approach and never inform anyone about you. (20) Surely, if they become aware of your presence, they will certainly stone you or return you to their religion (D'īn), after which you shall never again be successful.

THE PEOPLE OF THE CAVE AWAKEN, TRY TO ESTABLISH HOW LONG THEY SLEPT AND THEY SEND SOMEONE TO BRING FOOD FOR THEM FROM THE CITY

After their long sleep, Allāh caused them to rouse. As they did so, *"One of them said, 'How long have you remained?' They replied, 'We remained here for a day or a part of a day."* They could not say with certainty how long they slept, but estimated the period. Commentators say that they slept during the morning and, when they awoke all the years later, it was evening. It therefore appeared to them that it was the evening of the same day on which they slept.

"Others said, 'Your Lord knows best how long you tarried." These people realised that they must have slept for a longer period, which could not be determined because of their uncertainty after awakening. Some commentators say that this realisation dawned on them when they noticed the extent to which their hair and nails had grown.

People normally grow very hungry after sleeping. Therefore, they said, *"Dispatch someone to the town with this silver* (coins). *Let him then see which food is purest* [Lawful *(Halāl)* and not slaughtered in the name of any idol] *so that he can bring you some provisions from there. However, he should be subtle in his approach and never inform anyone about you."* They thought that the same disbelievers *(kuffār)* dominance prevailed in the territory. Therefore, they said, *"Surely, if they become aware of your presence, they will certainly stone you or return you to their religion (D'īn), after which you shall never again be successful."*

A question arises at this juncture. The question is that if any believer *(Mu'min)* is forced to claim disbelief *(kufr)*, he is permitted to do so to preserve his life. In this case he will not be accountable in the Hereafter. This being the

case, why did the people of the cave then say that if they are forced back to disbelief *(kufr)* they *"shall never again be successful?"*

In my humble opinion, these people did not know about this because they had not learned from a Prophets عليهم السلام or any other man of knowledge. This is similar to the case of Sayyidina Hanzalah رضى الله عنه when he came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "Hanzalah has become a Munāfiq (hypocrite)!" When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him the reason for this statement, he said that when he was in the company of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and heard of Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell, these actually seemed to appear before them. However, he said, when he left the noble presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and engaged in play and frolic with their families and children, he seemed to forget Prophetic words.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "By the Being in Whose control my life is! If you could perpetually maintain the frame of mind you have when you are with me, the angels would shake your hands while you are in your beds and while you walk. But, O Hanzalah, this is rare (i.e. the condition in which you are when in my company)." Just as Sayyidina Hanzalah رضى الله عنه thought that he had turned hypocrite *(munafiq)*, the people of the cave thought that they would become disbelievers *(kuffār)* if they spoke words of infidelity *(kufr)* under duress.

Certain commentators have mentioned that they referred to total success i.e. although it will be permissible under such extenuating circumstances to utter words of disbelief *(kufr)*, but the best would be to refuse and face the consequences. They therefore felt that they would be deprived of practising this better option.

However, when the person (by the name of Tamlīkha) bought some food, he paid with the old coins that he had with him. Seeing these extremely old coins, the merchant from whom he bought was taken aback, and the story spread in the city. The city was by then dominated by believers and even the king was a believer *(Mu'min)*. When the king received news about this stranger, he rode back with the people to the cave.

According to one narration, when Tamlīkha informed the others that the city was populated by believers *(Mu'minīn)* and that the king had arrived to meet them, they were exuberant and emerged to meet him. He honoured them and they were pleased to meet him. According to another narration, they died upon receiving this news. Both these narrations are Isra'īliyāt (from the Bani Isra'īl). [*Qurtubi v. 10 p.389*]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوٓا۟ أَنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَأَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَآ إِذْ يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ ۖ فَقَالُوا۟ ٱبْنُوا۟ عَلَيْهِم بُنْيَٰنًا ۖ رَّبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ ۚ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ غَلَبُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾

(21) In this manner We disclosed them so that the people might know that Allāh's promise is true and that there is no doubt about the coming of judgment day (Qiyāmah). The people disputed about them and said, "Build a structure

over them. Their Lord knows them best." Those who proved dominant in their affairs said, "We shall definitely build a Masjid over them."

THE PEOPLE DECIDE TO CONSTRUCT A MASJID AT THE SITE OF THE CAVE

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه writes that after many generations, a believer *(Mu'min)* king ascended to the throne. He accepted the belief in resurrection, but there were people in his kingdom who believed that only souls will be resurrected, not physical bodies. They said this because they felt that bodies will be decomposed by the earth.

The king was perturbed by this difference of opinion and, putting on clothing of coarse cloth, he sat in the sand and prayed to Allāh to reveal some sign by which people can be convinced that it was not at all impossible for people to be resurrected with body and soul. Allāh accepted his supplication *(du'ā)* by rousing the people of the cave in his period. He realised that they were the same people who went into hiding from the time of the tyrant Digyānūs and he was now able to convince the masses that people can be physically resurrected after hundreds of years.

With reference to this Allāh says, *"In this manner We disclosed them so that the people might know that Allāh's promise is true and that there is no doubt about the coming of judgment day (Qiyāmah)."* After the people witnessed them, the people of the cave passed away in the cave, according to the wording of the Qur'ān.

"The people disputed about them and said, 'Build a structure over them. Their Lord knows them best.' Those who proved dominant in their affairs said, 'We shall definitely build a Masjid over them." This verse seems to indicate that the dispute arose at the cave when they died.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 15 p.234*) reports that the king saw that the faces of people of the cave were still resplendent and that their clothing was still intact. They related their story to him and, as they were discussing, they told him, "We hand you over in trust to Allāh. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be on you. May Allāh, the Most Exalted protect you and your kingdom. We seek refuge on your behalf with Allāh from the evils of man and Jinn." They then returned to their positions in the cave and passed away. The king buried them and constructed a mosque *(Masjid)* at the entrance of the cave.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has also reported that when the person who was charged with buying food was brought to the king, the king asked him who he was. He replied that he was from the same city and that he had left it only the day before. He showed them where he lived and even mentioned the names of some people whom those present did not recognise.

However, the king recalled that some youths had disappeared at one stage and that their names were recorded on a tablet that was kept in the state treasury. When he sent for the tablet, it revealed that these were the same persons. The king then went to the cave with a few people. As the person informed his companions of the situation, Allāh caused them all to pass away and the king and his men were unable to enter the cave when Allāh cast a veil upon their eyes.

It was then that *"the people disputed with regard to them and said, 'Build a structure over them. Their Lord knows them best.'* Those who proved dominant in their affairs (viz. the king and his men) *said, 'We shall definitely build a Masjid over them."* This Masjid (*mosque*) was built at the mouth of the cave and not over the graves. The graves were also not the Qibla of the Masjid. Therefore, none may raise the objection that a Masjid should not be built upon graves.

With regard to the phrase *"Their Lord knows them best"* the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that this was in reply to another debate that ensued with regard to the details of the people of the cave. The people argued with regard to their ancestry, their history and with regard to the period that they spent in the cave.

سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَـٰثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًۢا بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّىٓ أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِم مَّا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَآءً ظَـٰهِرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِم مِّنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

(22) Some people said, "They were three, their dog being the fourth." Others said, "They were five, their dog being the sixth." They are merely guessing. Others say, "They were seven and their dog was the eighth." Say, "My Lord knows best what their number was and only a few people know them. So do not delve into debate regarding them, except for superficial discussion. And do not even ask anyone about them."

THE DISPUTE REGARDING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAVE AND THE SOLUTION

The above verse cites three opinions with regard to the number of people who were in the cave. The first says that *"They were three, their dog being the fourth"*. The second states that *"They were five, their dog being the sixth."* The third says that *"They were seven and their dog was the eighth."*

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 15 p.480*) says that these three opinions arose during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The first was held by the Jews, the second by the Christians of Najrān who came to Madinah. With them was the leader of the Nastūriya sect of Christians by the name of Āqib. The third opinion was that of some Muslims.

After mentioning the first two opinions, Allāh says, *"They are merely guessing."* After mentioning the third opinion Allāh says, *"Say, 'My Lord knows best what their number was and only a few people know them."* Commentators deduce from this that the third opinion is the correct one.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that he is of those few who know the correct number. He then said that they were seven and their dog was the eighth. This is the view of Muslims in general. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has enumerated their names as Makaslimina, Yamlīkha, Martūs, Thayunus, Dardanūs, Kafashaytitūs and Mantanwasīs, and their dog

was named Qitmīr.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه has most probably heard the names from someone of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)*. The correct pronunciation of these names is not known.

"'So do not delve into debate regarding them, except for superficial discussion." One should narrate only what the Qur'ān says and not delve further into the subject. Allāh also instructs, *"And do not even ask anyone about them."* Whoever will be asked will report only such things that have no concrete basis.

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَاْىْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾ إِلَّآ أَن يَشَآءَ ٱللَّهُ ۚ وَٱذْكُر رَّبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَهْدِيَنِ رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَٰذَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

(23) Never say with regard to anything, "I will certainly do so tomorrow. (24) Unless you add, "By Allāh's will." Remember your Lord when you forget and say, "I have the hope that my Lord will guide me to what is closer thereto in direction."

REPROACH FOR NOT ADDING "INSHA ALLĀH" WHEN MAKING A PROMISE

Ibn Kathīr reports that the Quraysh sent Nadhr bin Hārith and Uqba bin Abi Mu'īt to Madinah [before the migration *(Hijrah)*] to ask the Jews about the description of the final Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Jews told them to pose three questions to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. If he answered these, then he was a true Prophet.

The first question was that they should ask him to relate the story about some youths who had left their homes in the past. The second question was that they should ask him about the person who extensively travelled to the east and the west. The third was about the reality of the soul.

When they returned from Madinah, they told the Quraysh that they now had a decisive way of ascertaining the truth about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When they posed the questions to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he told them that he would give them a reply the following day. However, he omitted to add ***"Insha Allāh"*** ("If Allāh wills").

As a result of this, no revelation came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for fifteen days and the Polytheists began to taunt him. This caused him much grief, but on the 15th day, Jibr'īl عليه السلام appeared with Surah Kahf, in which Allāh chides the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for not adding "Insha Allāh" to his promise. The reply to them questions came in this Surah and the third was answered in Surah Bani Isra'īl.

People of high rank are rebuked even for things that seem minor. Being the best of creation, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was chided by Allāh even for omitting a non-obligatory act. A person can never be certain of the duration of his life and can die before he can fulfil his promises. Even if he lives, he still

cannot be certain whether he will be able to conclude the intended act. He should therefore add "Insha Allāh" to every promise. "Insha Allāh" should not be added because a person intends to breach the promise.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"Remember your Lord when you forget...* "It has been reported from certain commentators, including Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه, that a person may add ***"Insha Allāh"*** to his promise if he forgets, even though this may be after some time. The addition of "Insha Allāh" will then be considered to be part of the promise. Although this interpretation seems to correlate with the context, yet this verse alone is insufficient to pass a ruling in this regard because it does not clearly state this. Imām Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the late addition of "Insha Allāh" will serve only to increase blessings and amend the omission. However, it will not annul a vow or a promise to free a slave. It will annul these things only if it is added immediately after speaking the sentence. Many other Imāms agree with the view of Imām Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه and this view is substantiated by many other sources.

According to this view, the above verse will mean that Allāh should be immediately brought to mind when a person errs and forgets Him. This is similar to the night of Ta'rīs when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Sahābah رضى الله عنهم slept through the Fajr Salāh. On that occasion he told them, *"When any of you forget a Salāh or sleeps through it, then he should perform it as soon and he remembers because Allāh says, "Establish Salāh for My remembrance."*.

".....and say, 'I have the hope that my Lord will guide me to what is closer thereto in direction." i.e. my Lord will guide me to display to you things that are even more convincing of my Prophethood than the story of the people of the cave. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was therefore able to tell people of stories that predated the people of the cave. These were such that none could have known without divine revelation.

وَلَبِثُوا۟ فِى كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَٰثَ مِا۟ئَةٍ سِنِينَ وَٱزْدَادُوا۟ تِسْعًا ﴿٢٥﴾ قُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا۟ لَهُۥ غَيْبُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ أَبْصِرْ بِهِۦ وَأَسْمِعْ مَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِۦ مِن وَلِىٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِى حُكْمِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

(25) They remained in their cave for three hundred years, adding another nine to it. (26) Say, "Allāh knows best how long they stayed. He has knowledge of the unseen things within the heavens and the earth. How well does He see and hear! They have no helper besides Him, and none can be partner in His law."

HOW LONG DID THE YOUTHS REMAIN IN THE CAVE?

"They remained in their cave for three hundred years, adding another nine to it. Say, 'Allāh know best how long they stayed. He has knowledge of the unseen things within the heavens and the earth." Since the cave and the people in it were all on earth, Allāh has the most complete knowledge about them.

In emphasis Allāh adds, *"How well does He see and hear!"* None is more capable of hearing and seeing than He is. The translation of the above phrase

cannot truly be expressed in any language besides Arabic.

"They have no helper besides Him, and none can be partner in His law." Allāh decrees as He pleases and His decree is binding on all.

Note 1: It is apparent from the above verse that the youths remained in the cave for 309 years. This is the accepted belief of the commentators. However, it has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that this is the statement of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)*, and that Allāh wishes to refute this statement of theirs when he says, *"Say, 'Allāh know best how long they stayed.*

However, the authenticity of this report from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has not been established and it is not necessary that anyone be refuted by the sentence, *"Say, 'Allāh know best how long they stayed.*

Note 2: Some commentators have mentioned that the phrase *"three hundred years, adding another nine to* it" does not mean 309 years. They say that the true period was 300 years according to the solar calendar and 309 according to the lunar calendar. They say that Allāh phrased the verse in this manner to indicate the period according to the two calendars. However, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has refuted this opinion because he says that 300 solar years would add up to exactly 309 years, 73 days, 9 hours and 48 minutes. And Allāh knows best.

وَاتْلُ مَآ أُوحِىَ إِلَيْكَ مِن كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمَـٰتِهِۦ وَلَن تَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾ وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَوٰةِ وَالْعَشِىِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُۥ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَوٰةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُۥ عَن ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُۥ فُرُطًا ﴿٢٨﴾

(27) Recite what has been revealed to you from the Book of your Lord. There is none who can alter His words and you will certainly not find another place of refuge besides with Him. (28) Restrain yourself with those who, seeking His pleasure, call to their Lord morning and evening. And do not shift your attention from them with the intent of acquiring the adornment of this worldly life. Do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who pursues his passions and whose affair is transgressing.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IS COMMANDED TO RECITE ALLĀH'S BOOK AND TO REMAIN WITH THOSE WHO ARE ATTACHED TO ALLĀH

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 4 p.2 19*) reports from Sayyidina Salmān Farsi رضى الله عنه that Uyayna bin Badr and Aqra bin Hābis (who were from those whom the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gratified for certain reasons) once came to the Holy

Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم They told him that they would sit with him and converse only if he sat apart from the poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم like Sayyidina Salmān رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Bilāl رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه, etc so that they do not have to smell the stench of their coarse clothing.

In response to this request Allāh revealed the verses *"Recite what has been revealed to you from the Book of your Lord ...* (until the verse) ... *We have prepared for the disbelievers..."*

Sayyidina Sahl bin Hunayf رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once in one of his rooms when Allāh revealed the verse *"Restrain yourself with those who, seeking His pleasure, call to their Lord morning and evening."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then went out to look for these people.

These were the poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم whose hair was dishevelled, whose skin was parched and who had only one piece of cloth to clothe themselves with. Upon seeing them, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sat with them and said, "All praise be to Allāh Who has created within my Ummah such people with whom I have been commanded to remain with."

Normally, the leaders of nations look down upon the poor pious people, not realising that the wealth and position that intoxicate them will soon disappear, whereas Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds last forever. It is extremely foolish to look down on those who are busy acquiring the things that are everlasting.

There were people who did not accept Islām fully during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to give them things to maintain their Belief *(Imān)*. They were called the "Mu'allifatul Qulūb". The narration mentioned initially quoted the names of some of them who asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to sit apart from the poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم.

Allāh did not allow the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to accede to their request, but revealed the verses, *"Recite what has been revealed to you from the Book of your Lord."* If their request entails ostracising the true believers *(Mu'minīn)*, it will not be entertained. This is Allāh's decree and *"There is none who can alter His words and you will certainly not find another place of refuge besides with Him."*

"Restrain yourself (remain) with those who, seeking His pleasure, call to their Lord morning and evening. And do not shift your attention from them with the intent of acquiring the adornment of this worldly life." This verse is filled with praise for the illustrious Sahābah رضى الله عنهم. Here Allāh addresses the thought that might have entered the mind of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, that by acceding to the requests of these affluent people, Islām could be strengthened by them becoming Muslims. Allāh says that the adornment of Islām is not in worldly wealth but in Belief *(Imān)* and obedience to Allāh.

"Do not obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who pursues his passions and whose affair is transgressing." This verse refers to the leaders of the Quraysh.

وَقُلِ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَن شَآءَ فَلْيُؤْمِن وَمَن شَآءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ إِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ نَارًا

أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا ۚ وَإِن يَسْتَغِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ ۚ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾

(29) Speak the truth that comes from your Lord. Whomsoever is willing, should believe, and whoever is unwilling should remain as a disbeliever. We have surely prepared for the oppressors a Fire, the walls of which will encompass them. If they beseech help, they will be helped with water that is like the residue of burnt oil and will scorch their faces. A terrible drink indeed! Hell is the worst of resting places.

THE TRUTH IS APPARENT SO THOSE WHO WISH TO BELIEVE SHOULD DO SO AND THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO BELIEVE NEED NOT DO SO THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE DOOMED TO HELL

The Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures have made the truth crystal clear. Therefore Allāh declares, *"Speak the truth that comes from your Lord. Whomsoever is willing, should believe, and whoever is unwilling should remain as a disbeliever."* Each party will receive their dues in the Hereafter.

No foolish person should think that this verse permits being a disbeliever *(kāfir)*. The verse merely expresses the choice that is presented to every person. It is for this reason that the adjoining verses describe the plight of the disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the bliss to be enjoyed by the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. In the same way, someone might say, "Go on. Do as you please. Soon you shall see what punishment you will receive!"

Allāh then continues to describe the plight of the disbelievers (kuffār). He says, *"We have surely prepared for the oppressors a Fire, the walls of which will encompass them."* They will be unable to escape from Hell. Besides the scorching of the fire, they will suffer the severest of thirst. Allāh says, *"If they beseech help, they will be helped with water that is like the residue of burnt oil..."* Despite the condition of the drink, they will be so thirsty that they will take it to their lips to drink. It will then *"scorch their faces."*

In addition to this drink, they will fed with the Zaqqūm tree, which will be extremely unpalatable and stinking. This will be given to them with boiling water. Surah Sāffāt, Surah Wāqi'ah and Surah Dukhān make mention of the Zaqqūm tree in Hell. A verse of Surah Muhammad says, *"those who will abide forever in the Fire and are given boiling water to drink, which tears their innards to shreds?"* Despite the heat of the boiling water, the people of Hell will drink it *"like thirsty camels."*

"A terrible drink indeed! Hell is the worst of resting places." Hell has been termed as a resting-place (although it can never be so) to admonish the disbelievers *(kuffār)* for choosing the life of this world and flouting Allāh's laws. They thought that they would be depriving themselves of rest and comfort in the world by accepting Islām. Therefore, they considered disbelief *(kufr)* as their ticket to rest and enjoyment. Allāh tells them here that this Hell was the resting-

place that their infidelity *(kufr)* eventually earned them, and it is indeed a terrible resting-place!

Sayyidina Abu Saīd Khudri رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Hell has four walls, the length of each being the distance of a forty year's walk. [*Tirmidhi*]

(30) As for those who believe and do good deeds, We shall certainly not put to waste the rewards of those whose actions are good. (31) For these people shall be eternal gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they will be adorned with golden bangles and will wear green garments of "Sundus" and "Istabraq" and they will recline on couches. A fine reward indeed, and the best of resting-places!

THE REWARD OF THE BELIEVERS AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE CLOTHING AND JEWELLERY OF HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*

After describing the people of Hell, Allāh speaks about those who are believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh says, *"As for those who believe and do good deeds, We shall certainly not put to waste the rewards of those whose actions are good."* These are the people whose deeds were sincerely for Allāh and according to the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ahadīth.

"For these people shall be eternal gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they will be adorned with golden bangles and will wear green garments of 'Sundus' and 'Istabraq' and they will recline on couches." We cannot base our perception of the Hereafter upon our knowledge of this world. Although gold and jewellery are forbidden for men in this world, it will be permitted in the Hereafter. Then too, although one might think that bangles and other jewellery do not suit men, these will look beautiful in Heaven *(Jannah)*. In fact, people in many parts of the world still dress their men in such items of finery, especially the royalty.

The clothing of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be green because green appeals to the eye. A verse of Surah Hajj states, *"Their clothing therein [in Heaven (Jannah)] will be of silk." 'Sundus' and 'Istabraq'* will be types of silk, the first being a thinner type than the second. Ibn Kathīr states that *'Istabraq'* is that silk which has a shine and is used for underwear. It seems that *'Istabraq'* will be worn as undergarments in Heaven *(Jannah)* and *'Sundus'* will be worn over it.

Allāh concludes this discussion by stating that Jannah is "A fine reward indeed, and the best of resting places."

۞وَٱضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَٰبٍ وَحَفَفْنَٰهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا
بَيْنَهُمَا زَرْعًا ﴿32﴾ كِلْتَا ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ ءَاتَتْ أُكُلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِم مِّنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَفَجَّرْنَا خِلَٰلَهُمَا نَهَرًا
﴿33﴾ وَكَانَ لَهُۥ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَٰحِبِهِۦ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَنَا۠ أَكْثَرُ مِنكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿34﴾
وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُۥ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِۦ قَالَ مَآ أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أَبَدًا ﴿35﴾ وَمَآ أَظُنُّ
ٱلسَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّدِدتُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّى لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنقَلَبًا ﴿36﴾ قَالَ لَهُۥ
صَاحِبُهُۥ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُۥٓ أَكَفَرْتَ بِٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكَ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّىٰكَ رَجُلًا
﴿37﴾ لَّٰكِنَّا۠ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ رَبِّى وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّىٓ أَحَدًا ﴿38﴾ وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا
شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِ ۚ إِن تَرَنِ أَنَا۠ أَقَلَّ مِنكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿39﴾ فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّىٓ أَن
يُؤْتِيَنِ خَيْرًا مِّن جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا ﴿40﴾
أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَآؤُهَا غَوْرًا فَلَن تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُۥ طَلَبًا ﴿41﴾ وَأُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِۦ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ
كَفَّيْهِ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِىَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّىٓ أَحَدًا ﴿42﴾
وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُۥ فِئَةٌ يَنصُرُونَهُۥ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنتَصِرًا ﴿43﴾ هُنَالِكَ ٱلْوَلَٰيَةُ لِلَّهِ ٱلْحَقِّ ۚ
هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا ﴿44﴾

(32) Relate to them the analogy of two men We had granted one of them two vineyards surrounded by date palms and grown a plantation between the two. (33) Both orchards bore fruit and We did not withhold anything from them. We even caused a river to gush forth amidst the two. (34) He had an abundance of fruit. While speaking to his companion, he said, "I have more wealth than you and my people are dominant." (35) He entered his garden as an oppressor unto himself and said, "I do not suppose that this garden will ever be destroyed.' (36) "And I do not suppose that judgment day (Qiyāmah) will ever arrive. If I should ever be returned to my Lord I shall certainly find a better place of return." (37) As they spoke, his companion told him, "Do you disbelieve in Him Who has created you from sand, then from a drop and then perfected you as a man?" (38) "But He is my Lord and I shall not ascribe anyone as partner unto Him." (39)"When you enter your garden, why do you rather not say, 'Māshā Allāh La Quwwata illa billāh'? If you think that I have less wealth and children than you... (40) ....then the time is close when My Lord shall grant me better than your garden and send to your garden a calamity from the sky, turning it into an open plain. (41) ...or it's water would sink into the depths of the earth, after which you will be unable to even look for it." (42) So his fruit were engulfed by a disaster and he began to wring his hands in lamentation of what he had invested in it. The vineyards had collapsed on their trellises and he said, "if only

I had not ascribed any partner to my Lord!" (43) He had no troops to assist him against Allāh, neither could he avenge himself. (44) At times like this, assistance is only from Allāh, the True Deity. He is the best for reward and the best in the end.

THE ANALOGY OF TWO PERSONS, ONE BEING WEALTHY, WHILE THE OTHER WAS POOR

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 161*) reports that the above incident occurred between two persons in Makkah. They both belonged to the Bani Makhzūm tribe. The Muslim was Sayyidah Abu Salamah رضى الله عنه [who was married to Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], and the infidel *(kāfir)* was Aswad bin Abdul Asad.

According to others, the two men belonged to the Bani Isra'īl and their example is quoted here as a lesson, the first person being a representation of Uyayna bin Hisn and his comrades, whole the believer *(Mu'min)* being the representation of Sayyidina Salmān Farsi رضى الله عنه and the other poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم. (Uyayna and his party were the ones who requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to sit apart from the poor Sahābah رضى الله عنهم so that they could draw closer).

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the two were the sons of a king from the Bani Isra'īl. The one spent his wealth in Allāh's path, while the other was a disbeliever *(kāfir)*. Allāh says, *"We had granted one of them* (the disbeliever *(kāfir)*) *two vineyards surrounded by date palms* (like a wall) *and grown a plantation between the two. Both orchards bore fruit and We did not withhold anything from them. We even caused a river to gush forth amidst the two."*

These orchards made him extremely wealthy. The other brother was poor, so the wealthy one *"While speaking to his companion* (the poorer brother), *he said, 'I have more wealth than you and my people are dominant."*

In addition to belittling his brother, *"He entered his garden as an oppressor unto himself* (as a disbeliever *(kāfir)* and ungrateful for Allāh's bounties) *and said, 'I do not suppose that this garden will ever be destroyed. And I do not suppose that judgment day (Qiyāmah) will ever arrive. If I should ever be returned to my Lord I shall certainly find a better place of return."*

The affluent disbelievers *(kuffār)* and the sinners think that they will find good fortune in the Hereafter as well because they deem themselves to be Allāh's favourites in this world. However, they are unaware of the procedure adopted by Allāh. When a person refuses to believe, Allāh grants him the things in this world despite his disbelief so that these can lead him further astray and make him more deserving of the punishment in store for him.

"As they spoke, his companion [the believer (Mu'min)] told him, 'Do you disbelieve in Him Who has created you from sand, then from a drop and then perfected you as a man?" In this manner he reproached him for his undue pride and haughtiness, impressing upon his mind that he is nothing in reality.

Allāh created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام from sand and all of mankind stemmed from him by way of the seeds of their fathers. Here, the believer

(Mu'min) brother also drew the attention of his brother to the fact that he should be thankful to Allāh for allowing him to be properly formed at birth because all children are not so fortunate. Thereafter, he expressed his belief by declaring, *"But He is my Lord and I shall not ascribe anyone as partner unto Him."*

Advising him further he said, *"When you enter your garden, why 'do you rather not say, 'Māshā Allāh La Quwwata illa billāh?"* (i.e. Only what Allāh wills shall happen and there is no might without Allāh's help). Only Allāh preserves things.

He continued to say, *"If you think that I have less wealth and children than you, then the time is close when My Lord shall grant me better than your garden* (in the Hereafter or in both worlds) *and send to your garden a calamity from the sky, turning it into an open plain, or its water would sink into the depths of the earth, after which you will be unable to even look for it."* He told him all of this in reply to his earlier statement that *'I do not suppose that this garden will ever be destroyed."*

The believer *(Mu'min)* brother wished to inform the other that Allāh is capable of destroying everything that he has in numerous ways that are beyond his control. Thereafter, he would have nothing to boast about.

However, his advice fell on deaf ears and the disbeliever *(kāfir)* was soon struck by an awful calamity.

Allāh says, *"So his fruit* (his possessions) *were engulfed by a disaster* (a raging fire) *and he began to wring his hands in lamentation of what he had invested in* it. *The vineyards had collapsed on their trellises..."* He began to mourn over the wealth that he had invested, thinking that if he had not invested so much, he would only have lost a bit of the orchards and not all his money as well. Then the advice of his brother made sense to him and he said, *"If only I had not ascribed any partner to my Lord!"*

Allāh then says, *"He had no troops to assist him against Allāh, neither could he avenge himself"*

Although two vineyards were mentioned initially, the later verses spoke of one only. It should be understood that the singular word used refers to both orchards and also includes the plantation enclosed within the orchards.

"At times like this assistance is only from Allāh, the True Deity. He is the best for reward and the best in the end." Whatever is spent in Allāh's path shall earn great rewards and the outcome will be best in the Hereafter, where the person will have no regrets. The rewards of the Hereafter are unlimited and unending.

Of course, the true believers *(Mu'minīn)* can also suffer calamities in this world, but these are not sent as punishment for them. They are a means of forgiving their sins and elevating their stages in the Hereafter. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated from the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم that the believer *(Mu'min)* man and believer *(Mu'min)* woman will be afflicted by adversities in this world until they meet Allāh without a sin to their account. [*"Mishkāt" p. 136*]

Note: The previous ruku mentioned that the wealthy Quraysh leaders wanted to alienate the poor Sahābah رضی اللہ عنہم from the company of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Thereafter, mention was made of

Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell, alluding to the fact that the poor Sahābah رضی الله عنهم would be exalted to the high ranks of Heaven *(Jannah)* because of their Belief *(Imān)* whereas the wealthy disbelievers *(kuffār)* would have to suffer in Hell. In the similitude of the two brothers, the same distinction is drawn between the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and the disbelievers *(kuffār)*, even though the disbelievers *(kuffār)* may possess more worldly wealth. Therefore, none should look down with scorn at the poor believers *(Mu'minīn)* because they will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* and the proud and haughty people may lose all their wealth in this very world and will be absolutely bankrupt in the Hereafter.

وَٱضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ فَٱخْتَلَطَ بِهِۦ نَبَاتُ ٱلْأَرْضِ
فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ ٱلرِّيَٰحُ ۗ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿45﴾ ٱلْمَالُ وَٱلْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ
ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿46﴾ وَيَوْمَ نُسَيِّرُ
ٱلْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً وَحَشَرْنَٰهُمْ فَلَمْ نُغَادِرْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿47﴾ وَعُرِضُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
صَفًّا لَّقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍۭ ۚ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَلَّن نَّجْعَلَ لَكُم مَّوْعِدًا ﴿48﴾
وَوُضِعَ ٱلْكِتَٰبُ فَتَرَى ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَٰوَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَٰذَا
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّآ أَحْصَىٰهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا۟ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ حَاضِرًا ۗ وَلَا
يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿49﴾

(45) Relate to them the similitude of this worldly life as the rain that We send from the sky, by which the plants of the earth flourish. Thereafter they become debris, to be carried by the winds. Allāh always has control over everything. (46) Wealth and sons are merely adornments of this worldly life. The lasting good deeds are best in the sight of your Lord in terms of reward and best in terms of expectations. (47) That day when We will cause the mountains to fly, when you will see the earth as an open plain and We shall resurrect them, not omitting any of them at all. (48) They will be presented before your Lord in rows. "We have certainly brought you as We have created you the first time. But you deemed that We would never fix an appointment for you." (49) The record of deeds shall be placed and you will see the sinners afraid of what is contained in them. They will say, "Woe be to us.' What is with this book that it does not leave anything small or large unrecorded?" They will find their deeds present and your Lord shall not oppress anyone.

A SIMILITUDE OF THE TEMPORARY WORLD AND THE ANXIETY OF THE SINNERS ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION *(QIYĀMAH)*

Explaining the reality of this world Allāh says, *"Relate to them the similitude*

of this worldly life as the rain that We send from the sky, by which the plants of the earth flourish." These plants and vegetation begin to grow extremely well and they begin to intertwine and merge into each other because of their abundance. People become excited and pleased with this. However, the time comes when these wilt away and dry up, *"Thereafter they become debris, to be carried by the winds."*

The life of this world is much the same. Initially everything seems to flourish. Then man becomes so engrossed in the pleasures of this world that he forgets Allāh and the Hereafter. Eventually the curtains -close on him and he is left with nothing.

Sayyidina Abu Saīd رضی الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلی الله علیه وسلم said, "This world is sweet and flourishing. However, Allāh has placed man as viceroy on earth and will observe how he behaves. Therefore, guard against the world (by not attaching oneself to it) and guard against women. The first dissension that arose among the Bani Isra'īl was over women." [*Muslim*]

"Allāh always has control over everything." He will create when He pleases, will preserve when He wills and will destroy when He wills.

"Wealth and sons are merely adornments of this worldly life. The lasting good deeds are best in the sight of your Lord in terms of reward and best in terms of expectations." Therefore, the intelligent person will strive to gain what is eternal instead of the temporary commodities. Allāh says at the end of this Surah (verse 110), *"So whoever aspires for the meeting with his Lord should perform good deeds and not associate anyone as partner to the worship of his Lord."*

The adjective *"lasting"* alludes to the fact that only those deeds that last will be rewarded i.e. those deeds that are not destroyed by other evil deeds or by insincerity.

Thereafter Allāh describes the scene of judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"The day when We will cause the mountains to fly, when you will see the earth as an open plain..."*

Allāh says in Surah TāHā, *"They ask you about the mountains. Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them* [on the Day of judgment *(Qiyāmah)*] *leaving the earth as a barren plain on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions.'"* [*Surah 20, verses 105-107*]

On the Day of Judgement, even the sun, the moon and the stars will lose their glitter and the sky will be rent asunder. When the trumpet is blown, people will be raised from their graves. Allāh says, *"...and We shall resurrect them, not omitting any of them at all."*

Thereafter *"They will be presented before your Lord in rows.* (They will be told,) *'We have certainly brought you as We have created you the first time."* They will appear before Allāh without any of their worldly wealth, not even their shoes and clothes. Surah Ān'ām states that Allāh will tell them, *"Undoubtedly you come to Us alone as We created you the first time and you have left behind what We had blessed you with."* [*Surah 6, verse 94*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلی الله

عليه وسلم said, "You will be raised barefooted, naked and uncircumcised." Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"As We initiated the first creation, We shall return it. This is a binding promise upon Us. We are undoubtedly the Ones Who can do."*

Some commentators have interpreted the phrase *"as We have created you the first time"* to mean that Allāh will recreate people just as easily as He had done when they were sent to this world. Therefore none should think that judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is an impossibility.

The disbelievers *(kuffār)* will also be told on the Day of Judgement, *"But you deemed that We would never fix an appointment for you."*

"The record of deeds shall be placed and you will see the sinners afraid of what is contained in them. They will say, 'Woe be to us! What is with this book that it does not leave anything small or large unrecorded?"' Although Allāh is able to punish people on the basis of His supreme knowledge, He will still present their record of deeds to them so that none may object. In addition to this, their limbs and other witnesses will be called to testify against them.

Those whose records will be given in their right hands will joyfully enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. On the other hand, the person whose record will be unfavourable will say, *"O dear! If only I had not been given my record and had not known my reckoning!"* [*Surah Hāqa (69), verses 25, 26*]

"They will find their deeds present and your Lord shall not oppress anyone." Nothing will be omitted, neither will they be punished for something that they did not do. Of course, those sins that were forgiven will not appear since they had long vanished.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ
رَبِّهِۦٓ ۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُۥ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُۥٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ مِن دُونِى وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّۢ ۚ بِئْسَ لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ بَدَلًا
﴿50﴾ ۞ مَّآ أَشْهَدتُّهُمْ خَلْقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنتُ مُتَّخِذَ
ٱلْمُضِلِّينَ عَضُدًا ﴿51﴾ وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا۟ شُرَكَآءِىَ ٱلَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ
يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّوْبِقًا ﴿52﴾ وَرَءَا ٱلْمُجْرِمُونَ ٱلنَّارَ فَظَنُّوٓا۟ أَنَّهُم مُّوَاقِعُوهَا
وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا۟ عَنْهَا مَصْرِفًا ﴿53﴾

(50) When We told the angels, "Prostrate to Ādam," they all prostrated except for Devil (Iblīs). He was from the Jinn and disobeyed the command of his Lord. Do you take him and his progeny as friends besides Me, whereas they are your enemies. Evil indeed is the substitution of the oppressors. (51) I have not made them witness to the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor witness to their own creation. And I shall not take those as accomplices who lead others astray. (52) Remember the day when Allāh will say "Call those whom you ascribed as

partners to Myself." Then they will call them, but they will not respond and We shall place a barrier between them. (53) The criminals will see the Fire and will be certain that they will plunge into it. They will not find anyone to rescue them from it.

SATAN *(IBLĪS)* REFUSES TO PROSTRATE TO SAYYIDINA ĀDAM عليه السلام AND HIM AND HIS PROGENY ARE ENEMIES TO MAN

"When We told the angels, 'Prostrate to Ādam (in reverence, not worship),*' they all prostrated except for Iblīs. He was from the Jinn and disobeyed the command of his Lord. "* The details of this epic were discussed in the verse 34 of Surah Baqarah, verses 11 and 12 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) and in verses 61 and 62 of Surah Bani Isra'īl (*Surah 17*). It was then that he vowed to mislead man. His progeny are also his accomplices in this sinister task.

Allāh says in surprise, *"Do you take him and his progeny as friends (by obeying them) besides Me, whereas they are your enemies. Evil indeed is the substitution of the oppressors."* Because of their ignorance, people foolishly chose to substitute the allegiance they owe to Allāh with allegiance to Satan *(Shaytān)*.

Allāh says, *"I have not made them witness to the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor witness to their own creation."* Allāh says that He did not require the presence and assistance of Satan *(Shaytān)* and his progeny when He created the universe. They are unable to assist Him in any way because He does not need them. It is therefore foolish to take them as friends instead of Allāh.

Allāh says further, *"And I shall not take those as accomplices who lead others astray."* Allāh tells man here that he is foolish to ascribe idols and other beings as partner to Him, because He never took them as partners and friends.

Allāh says in Surah Saba *[Surah 34, verse 22]*, *"Say, 'Call those whom you worship besides Allāh. They have no control over an atom 's weight in the heavens or in the earth. They do not even share any partnership in the two, and none of them are assistants to Allāh."*

"Remember the day when Allāh will say, 'Call those whom you ascribed as partners to Myself' Then they will call them (for help), but they will not respond..." They will not be able to help themselves, let alone be of any help to others. Allāh adds by saying, *"..... and We shall place a barrier between them."* Thereafter they will not even be able to see and reach each other.

"The criminals will see the Fire and will be certain that they will plunge into it. They will not find anyone to rescue them from it." To their utter despair, their inevitable doom will not be averted from them.

Note: The Arabic word "mowbiqa" (translated above as *"barrier")* literally refers to a place of destruction. The verse will therefore mean that a place of destruction viz. Hell will be between them, since they will all be cast into it. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" quotes from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that "mowbiqa" is the name of one of the valleys of Hell. Sayyidina Ikrama رحمة الله عليه says that it is a river of fire that flows along the edge of Hell. Therein are snakes that resemble black mules.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَانُ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾ وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ أَن يُؤْمِنُوا إِذْ جَاءَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَّا أَن تَأْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا ﴿٥٥﴾ وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۚ وَيُجَادِلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ ۖ وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَمَا أُنذِرُوا هُزُوًا ﴿٥٦﴾ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ ۚ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۖ وَإِن تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَن يَهْتَدُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٥٧﴾ وَرَبُّكَ الْغَفُورُ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ ۖ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوا لَعَجَّلَ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابَ ۚ بَل لَّهُم مَّوْعِدٌ لَّن يَجِدُوا مِن دُونِهِ مَوْئِلًا ﴿٥٨﴾ وَتِلْكَ الْقُرَىٰ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوا وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَهْلِكِهِم مَّوْعِدًا ﴿٥٩﴾

(54) We have undoubtedly expounded all types of subjects in the Qur'ān for people. Man has always been the worst disputant. (55) After the arrival of guidance the only thing that prevented people from believing and seeking forgiveness from their Lord was that the treatment of the previous people should come to them or that punishment should appear before them. (56) We sent the messengers only as bearers of glad tidings and warners. The disbelievers dispute using falsehood in order to eradicate the truth and they make a mockery of My verses and the warnings that have been given to them. (57) Who can be more unjust than he who has been advised with the verses of his Lord, but ignored them and forgot what he has sent forth? We have certainly placed a veil on their hearts lest they should understand it and placed a prop in their ears. In this condition even if you call them to guidance they shall never be guided aright. (58) Your Lord is the Most Forgiving, Full of mercy. If He were to take them to task for their deeds, He would have speedily afflicted them with punishment. However, they have been promised a term from which they will not find any sanctuary. (59) These are the towns that We have destroyed when they were oppressive, and We have stipulated a term for their destruction.

MAN IS EXTREMELY CONTENTIOUS AND USES FALSEHOOD TO ARGUE AGAINST THE TRUTH

Describing the contentious nature of man Allāh says, *"We have undoubtedly expounded all types of subjects in the Qur'ān for people.* (However, despite all of this, man refuses to accept because) *Man has always been the worst disputant."*

Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Has man not seen that We created him from a seed, after which he is suddenly an open adversary?"* [*Surah 36, verse 77*]

Allāh says in Surah Zukhruf, *"They only say this to you* (i.e. coin similitudes) *to dispute, for they are a people given to arguing."* [*Surah 43, verse 58*]

Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه reports that one night the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم arrived at his home to awaken him and Sayyidah Fātima رضى الله عنها for the Tahajjud Salāh. When he arrived he exclaimed, "Are you not performing Salāh?" Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه replied, "Our souls are in Allāh's control. He will awaken us when He pleases." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not reply and, while walking away, hit his hands on his thighs reciting the verse, *'Man has always been the worst disputant.*"

Further discussing the nature of man, Allāh says, *"After the arrival of guidance the only thing that prevented people from believing and seeking forgiveness from their Lord was that the treatment of the previous people should come to them or that punishment should appear before them."* This verse means that man seems to await punishment to come to him before he mends his ways and believes, just as it happened with the previous nations. However, when this happens, it will be too late.

"We sent the messengers only as bearers of glad tidings and warners. (However, instead of believing) The disbelievers dispute using falsehood in order to eradicate the truth..." Not stopping at this, they even go a step further and *"they make a mockery of My verses and the warnings that have been sounded to them."*

"Who can be more unjust than he who has been advised with the verses of his Lord, but ignored them and forgot what he has sent forth (i.e. his evil deeds)?" The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that because the Qur'ān was first revealed to the Arabs, they are addressed first. Thereafter the rest of mankind is also addressed in the same breath. It was the practice of the Arab polytheists to ignore what was told to them and to forget the evil of the infidelity *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk)* that they perpetrated.

With regard to those who shall never believe, Allāh says, *"We have certainly placed a veil on their hearts lest they should understand it* (the Qur'ān) *and placed a prop* (deafness) *in their ears."*

Emphasising the tragedy of their situation, Allāh says, *"In this condition even if you call them to guidance they shall never be guided aright."* They mocked and denied so much that there now remains no hope of their guidance.

"Your Lord is the Most Forgiving, Full of mercy." Allāh forgives whoever sincerely repents irrespective of the sins that he committed and He even allows people respite until they repent. Therefore He says, *"If He were to take them to task for their deeds, He would have speedily afflicted them with punishment. However, they have been promised a term from which they will not find any sanctuary."*

Despite the fact that the disbelievers *(kuffār)* request punishment from Allāh, it will not come to them until their period expires. When it does expire, they will not be granted any more respite whatsoever, nor will they be able to save themselves. "Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that another interpretation of the verse is that people will not find a sanctuary in which to hide against Allāh. [*v. 15 p.306*]

"These are the towns that We have destroyed when they were oppressive..." When the earlier nations disobeyed their Prophets عليهم السلام, they were destroyed. Allāh has phrased the verse in this manner because the Makkans were aware of these places and passed by some of them en route to Syria.

".....and We have stipulated a term for their destruction." Allāh warns the people of Makkah that they would also suffer the same fate when their term expires. Consequently, when the battle of Badr took place many of the polytheists leaders were killed and disgraced.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتَىٰهُ لَآ أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰٓ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ ٱلْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِىَ حُقُبًا
﴿60﴾ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَٱتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُۥ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿61﴾ فَلَمَّا
جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَىٰهُ ءَاتِنَا غَدَآءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِن سَفَرِنَا هَٰذَا نَصَبًا ﴿62﴾ قَالَ أَرَءَيْتَ إِذْ
أَوَيْنَآ إِلَى ٱلصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّى نَسِيتُ ٱلْحُوتَ وَمَآ أَنسَىٰنِيهُ إِلَّا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُۥ ۚ وَٱتَّخَذَ
سَبِيلَهُۥ فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿63﴾ قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ ۚ فَٱرْتَدَّا عَلَىٰٓ ءَاثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا ﴿64﴾
فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴿65﴾ قَالَ
لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿66﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِىَ
صَبْرًا ﴿67﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ خُبْرًا ﴿68﴾ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِىٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ
صَابِرًا وَلَآ أَعْصِى لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿69﴾ قَالَ فَإِنِ ٱتَّبَعْتَنِى فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِى عَن شَىْءٍ حَتَّىٰٓ أُحْدِثَ
لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿70﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَكِبَا فِى ٱلسَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا ۖ قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ
أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا إِمْرًا ﴿71﴾ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِىَ صَبْرًا ﴿72﴾ قَالَ
لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِى بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِى مِنْ أَمْرِى عُسْرًا ﴿73﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَٰمًا
فَقَتَلَهُۥ قَالَ أَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةًۢ بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَّقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا نُّكْرًا ﴿74﴾ ۞ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل
لَّكَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِىَ صَبْرًا ﴿75﴾ قَالَ إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَن شَىْءٍۭ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا تُصَٰحِبْنِى ۖ
قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِن لَّدُنِّى عُذْرًا ﴿76﴾ فَٱنطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ أَتَيَآ أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ ٱسْتَطْعَمَآ أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا۟
أَن يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَن يَنقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُۥ ۖ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ
عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴿77﴾ قَالَ هَٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنِكَ ۚ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِع عَّلَيْهِ
صَبْرًا ﴿78﴾

(60) When Mūsa said to the youngster, "I shall continue to walk until I reach the confluence of two seas or until a long period expires." (61) So when they reached the confluence of the two, they both forgot their fish and it tunnelled it's path into the ocean. (62) When they proceeded further, Mūsa عليه السلام told the

youngster, "Bring our breakfast. Without doubt, this journey has been extremely wearisome for us." (63) He replied, "Did I not tell you that when we sought shelter by the boulder I forgot the fish? It was certainly Shaytān that made me forget the fish. It made it's way into the sea in an extremely marvellous way." (64) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "That was what we were seeking!" So they retraced their steps.(65) Then they found a slave of Ours whom We had granted mercy especially from Ourselves and to whom We had given Our special knowledge. (66) Mūsa عليه السلام said to him, "May I follow you on condition that you teach me some of the special knowledge that has been taught to you?" (67) He replied, "You will surely not be able to bear with me..." (68) "How can you possibly bear with something, the knowledge of which you have not encompassed?" (69) Mūsa عليه السلام replied, "Insha Allāh, you shall find me to be patient and I shall not disobey any command of yours." (70) He said, "If you must follow me, then do not ask me about anything until I make mention of it myself" (71) So they proceeded until they boarded a boat and he made a hole in it. Mūsa عليه السلام exclaimed, "Have you made a hole to drown the people of the boat? You have certainly perpetrated a grave act." (72) He said, "Did I not say that you will be unable to bear with me?" (73) Mūsa عليه السلام said "Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten and do not be harsh with me in matters. (74) So they proceeded until they met a boy whom he killed. Mūsa عليه السلام burst out, "Have you killed an innocent soul that has not taken another soul? You have now surely perpetrated a great wrong." (75) He said "Did I not tell you that you will not be able to bear with me?" (76) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "If I question you about anything after this, then you need not remain with me. You have received an excuse from me." (77) So they proceeded until they came across the people of a town from whom they asked for food, but the people refused to host them. They then found a wall in the town that was on the point of collapse and he straightened it. Mūsa عليه السلام said, "If you wished, you could have taken payment for this." (78) He said, "This is the parting between us. I shall inform you of the interpretation of the incidents which you could not bear with patience."

THE STORY OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA AND KHIDR عليهما السلام

The story of Sayyidina Mūsa and Khidr عليه السلام has been mentioned in the books of hadith. Bukhari has recorded it in various places, sometimes briefly, and sometimes in detail. He has recorded it twice in the chapter of knowledge, the first time *(v. 1 p. 17)* in brevity and the second time (*v. 1 p.23*) in detail. He has recorded another detailed narration in the chapter of exegesis *(Tafsīr)* (*v. 2 p.287-290*).

Muslim has recorded the story in (*v. 2 p.269*) and "Nasaī" in (*v. 2 p.386.*). "Nasaī" has also recorded the hadith in the chapter of exegesis *(Tafsīr)* with many points of wisdom and lessons attached.

We shall presently relate the incident based on the narration of Bukhari from the chapter of exegesis *(Tafsīr)*. Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that once when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام delivered a sermon to the Bani Isra'īl, their eyes filled with tears and their hearts softened. After the sermon someone asked him whether there was anyone more

knowledgeable than him on earth. He replied that there was none. According to another narration he was asked as to who was the most knowledgeable person. He replied that he was.

Since he did not reply, *"Allāh knows best,"* Allāh reproached him and informed him that another servant of His at *"the confluence of two seas"* was more knowledgeable than himself. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام expressed the desire to meet this person and asked Allāh how he would recognise him.

Allāh told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to carry a fish with him in a basket. The fish would be given life at the place where he would meet this person. So Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام set out with the fish and his servant by the name of Sayyidina Yusha bin Nūn عليه السلام. He instructed Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام to inform him when the fish came to life. Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام told him that this was an extremely simple task and well within his capability.

They travelled throughout that day and night. Thereafter, they came to a boulder where they rested and slept. As they slept, the fish came to life, escaped from the basket and swam out into the sea. Allāh created a shelf in the sea for the fish, which was an extremely wondrous sight for Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام to witness.

They later proceeded further, but Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام forgot to mention the incident to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. When the morning of the following day dawned, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام *"told the youngster, 'Bring our breakfast. Without doubt, this journey has been extremely wearisome for us.*

Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام replied, *"Did I not tell you that when we sought shelter by the boulder I forgot the fish? It was certainly Satan (Shaytān) that made me forget the fish. It made its way into the sea in an extremely marvellous way."* It was certainly Satan *(Shaytān)* that caused him to forget because the event was such that none could easily forget. According to one narration, Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام did not inform Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام immediately when the event occurred because Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was asleep and he did not want to disturb him.

However, after informing him, *"Mūsa عليه السلام said, 'That was what (the place) we were' seeking!' So they retraced their steps."'*

THEY MEET SAYYIDINA KHIDR عليه السلام AND SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام REQUESTS TO ACCOMPANY HIM

As they reached the spot, they noticed a person lying in the water in his clothes. This was Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام greeted him with Salām and, being surprised, he asked, "Where has Salām come from in this place?" He asked Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام who he was and, when he received the reply, he asked whether he was the same Mūsa عليه السلام from the Bani Isra'īl. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام confirmed his identity, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام asked him why he had come.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told him that he had come to learn from him. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, "Is the Torah and the revelation that you receive not sufficient for you? O Mūsa! Allāh has granted me such knowledge that He has not granted to you and has granted you such knowledge that He has not

granted to me."

As they were speaking, a sparrow came nearby and took some water in its beak. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, "O Mūsa! In comparison to Allāh's knowledge, my knowledge and your knowledge do not even equal to the amount of water that this sparrow has taken from the ocean.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام requested to learn from Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, *"He replied, 'You will surely not be able to bear with me. How can you possibly bear with something, the knowledge of which you have not encompassed?"'*

"Mūsa عليه السلام replied, 'Insha Allāh, you shall find me to be patient and I shall not disobey any command of yours. He said, 'If you must follow me, then do not ask me about anything until I make mention of it myself."

They then walked along the coast until they came across a ferry that transported people across to another shore. When the two asked to be taken along, the owners of the ferry did not charge them a fee because they recognised Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام.

SAYYIDINA KHIDR عليه السلام REMOVES A PLANK FROM THE FERRY

As they proceeded on the ferry, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام took an axe and used it to remove one of the planks from the deck of the boat. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was astonished and asked Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام how he could do such a thing when the people had been kind enough to take them along without a fee. He said that this act would drown the people.

"Have you made a hole to drown the people of the boat? You have certainly perpetrated a grave act." Here Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did not accuse Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام of wanting to drown the people, but meant that the act would result in their drowning.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said this, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام replied by saying, *"Did I not say that you will be unable to bear with me?"*

"Mūsa عليه السلام said, 'Do not take me to task for what I have forgotten and do not be harsh with me in matters.'

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام OBJECTS WHEN SAYYIDINA KHIDR عليه السلام KILLS A BOY

After disembarking from the ferry, the two proceeded to a place where they noticed some boys playing. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام took one of the boys aside and, twisting his head, decapitated him. According to another narration, he severed his head with a knife.

Upon witnessing this *"Mūsa عليه السلام burst out, 'Have you killed an innocent soul* (because the child was not even mature) *that has not taken another soul? You have now surely perpetrated a great wrong.*

Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, *"Did I not tell you that you will not be able to bear with me?"* Realising that the two of them cannot possibly relate to each other, *"Mūsa عليه السلام said, 'If I question you about anything after this, then you need not*

remain with me. (I understand that) You have received an excuse (to separate yourself) *from me."*

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام OBJECTS TO THE RESTORATION OF A WALL AND THE TWO ARE SEPARATED

After journeying awhile, the twosome grew very tired and *"came across the people of a town from whom they asked for food, but the people refused to host them. They then found a wall in the town that was on the point of collapse and he straightened it (by hand)."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام responded by telling Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, *"These people refused to feed us and be our hosts. Why have you done this favour for them, If you wished, you could have taken payment for this* (with which we could have bought some food)."

At this juncture Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, *"This is the parting between us. I shall inform you of the interpretation of the incidents which you could not bear with patience."*

According to a narration in "Fat'hul Bāri" (*v. 8 p.420*) from Tha'labi رحمة الله عليه, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, "You have reprimanded me for damaging the boat, for killing the boy and for repairing the wall, but have forgotten your own deeds. You were cast into the river (as a child), killed a Copt and you gave water to the daughters of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام only for reward."

The explanation of Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام will follow in the next part. Insha Allāh.

أَمَّا ٱلسَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَٰكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدتُّ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَآءَهُم مَّلِكٌ
يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا ﴿٧٩﴾ وَأَمَّا ٱلْغُلَٰمُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَآ أَن يُرْهِقَهُمَا
طُغْيَٰنًا وَكُفْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾ فَأَرَدْنَآ أَن يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُ زَكَوٰةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾
وَأَمَّا ٱلْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَٰمَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي ٱلْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُۥ كَنزٌ لَّهُمَا وَكَانَ
أَبُوهُمَا صَٰلِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَن يَبْلُغَآ أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ
وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُۥ عَنْ أَمْرِي ذَٰلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِع عَّلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

(79)"As for the boat, it belonged to a few poor persons who worked by the sea. I wished to damage it (because) there was a king ahead of them who forcefully seized possession of every boat." (80) "As for the boy, both his parents were believers so we feared that he would embroil them in rebellion and disbelief" (81) "We intended that their Lord replace for them children who are better than he in purity and affection. (82) "As for the wall, it belonged to two orphaned boys in the town. Beneath it was their treasure and their father was a pious person, so your Lord intended that they come of age and excavate their treasure. This is the mercy of your Lord. I did not carry out these actions of my own accord. This is the interpretation of the things that you could not bear with patience."

SAYYIDINA KHIDR عليه السلام EXPLAINS THE ACTUALITY OF THE THREE INCIDENTS

Before they departed, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام informed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام about the reasons why he carried out the three actions, which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام found incorrigible.

"As for the boat, it belonged to a few poor persons who worked by the sea." The boat was their source of livelihood because they used it as a ferry. However, *"I wished to damage it (because) there was a king ahead of them who forcefully seized possession of every boat."* The tyrant took away every boat that was in serviceable

condition. For this reason, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام damaged that boat so that the king would not want it for himself. The owners could later repair the boat and continue with their business.

"As for the boy (he was a disbeliever while), both his parents were believers..." Muslim *(v. 2 p. 271)* reports that the boy was destined to remain a disbeliever. Since the parents were extremely attached to the child, *"we feared that he would embroil them in rebellion and disbelief"*

He would have exploited the love that his parents bore for him to make them disbelievers as well. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام continued to say, *"We intended that their Lord replace for them children who are better than he in purity and affection."* These children would be believers *(Mu'min)* and a blessing for their parents.

"As for the wall, it belonged to two orphaned boys in the town. Beneath it was their treasure..." If the wall fell, the people of the town would usurp the treasure that the father had left as inheritance for his children. Since they were orphans and *"their father was a pious person,"* therefore Allāh wished to treat them well. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said that *"your Lord intended that they come of age and excavate their treasure. This is the mercy of your Lord."*

"I did not carry out these actions of my own accord." Allāh commanded all the actions. Finally he said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"This is the interpretation of the things that you could not bear with patience."*

NOTES AND RULINGS

{1} Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was correct when he told the people that there was none more knowledgeable than he. He was the Prophet of Allāh عليه السلام who had his own Shari'ah and even the Torah was revealed to him. He was also a messenger to a large nation like the Bani Isrā'īl. Allāh reprimanded him for his statement because it was a claim that did not befit his status.

It is learnt from this that no person should claim that he knows the most even if it appears so. There could always be another who is more knowledgeable than himself, but whom he is unaware of. There are also numerous others who possess knowledge about things that he does not know anything about.

{2} It is learnt from this incident that it is permissible for one to take a servant along on a journey and to entrust certain tasks to him, like how Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام took Sayyidina Yusha bin Nūn عليه السلام with him. It is not preferable for a person to travel alone. There were many Sahabah رضي الله عنهم who served the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The most famous of these, is Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه.

{3} Another lesson learnt from this incident is that the student should go out to seek knowledge from the teacher and that the teacher does not have to go to the student. It for this reason that Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has narrated this story in his chapter concerning going out in search of knowledge. In this chapter he also mentions that Sayyidina Jābir bin Abdullāh رضي الله عنه undertook a month's journey merely to learn a single hadith from Sayyidina Abdullāh binUnays رضي الله عنه.

{4} Age does not matter when seeking knowledge. A person may be a child or an old man, but he is never exempted from acquiring knowledge. Bukhari reports that the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم even acquired knowledge after reaching old age.

{5} One should not be ashamed to learn from another person who may be lower in status to one. In this narrative, a great Prophet like Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام set out to learn from Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, who taught him something that he was unaware of.

{6} The student should never be lethargic in his travels for knowledge, and should be prepared to endure all difficulties. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"I shall continue to walk until I reach the confluence of two seas or until a long period expires."* The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* says that the Arabic word *"huqub"* (translated above as *"a long period"*) refers to a period of eighty years according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه.

Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to a period of seventy years, while the linguist, Farra رحمة الله عليه, has mentioned that it denotes a period of one year according to the terminology of the Quraysh. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that it refers to an indefinite extensive period.

{7} Muslim reports that when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told the person that he does not know of any person more knowledgeable than himself, Allāh told him, *"But Our servant Khidr is more knowledgeable than yourself!"* This indicates that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام knew the name of Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام before meeting him.

{8} The word *"Khidr"* means *'green and lush.'* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام got this name because he once sat on a dry and barren piece of ground; where after it became green and lush. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 483*]

{9} Commentators say that *"the confluence of two seas"* mentioned to by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام refers to the confluence of the Persian Sea and the Roman Sea.

{10} Muslim (*v. 2 p. 270*) reports that the fish was taken along as provision for the journey and was sprinkled with salt. The revival of this fish was to be the sign of their rendezvous with Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. This fact demonstrates that carrying provisions for a journey does not contradict Tawakkul (reliance on Allāh).

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام began to feel tired only after passing by his destination. Allāh has made man such that he does not tire along the way because of his eagerness and mustered courage. However, once he reaches his destination, he is overcome with exhaustion. Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام never realised that he had already passed the rendezvous, he had already done so and was affected by the above natural instinct.

{11} Although Satan *(Shaytān)* caused the journey to be prolonged when he made Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام forget the fish, the extra difficulty that the two endured was predestined by Allāh, for which they will receive added rewards

from Allāh. A believer *(Mu'min)* realises that he will be rewarded in trying times and appreciates these just as he appreciates good times.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام knew that man is bound to err and did not rebuke Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام when he told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that he had forgotten to inform him about the incident.

{12} Upon meeting Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام first greeted him with Salām. This teaches us that one should always greet another Muslim whenever he wishes to draw his attention. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Salām should always precede speech. [*Mishkāt p. 390*]

{13} Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام asked Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, *"May I follow you on condition that you teach me some of the special knowledge that has been taught to you?"* This statement teaches that one does not necessarily have to learn everything that a teacher can offer.

The mode of address used by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was one of respect, which did not make Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام feel that he was obliged to accede to the request. He did not tell Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام that he had travelled a great distance and that he now had no option but to teach him. In a similar respectful manner should a student make requests of his teacher.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام came to learn a different type of knowledge from Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام that was not imperative for eternal salvation. A person requires knowledge of the Shari'ah for eternal salvation, which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام already had. This indicates that it is permissible for one to travel in search of knowledge that is not imperative for salvation once this has already been acquired.

{14} The teacher should inform the student of his preferences and styles so that the student can decide whether he will be able to tolerate the mannerism of the teacher. If the student then promises to abide by the instructions of the teacher, the teacher should accept him.

The student should also rely on Allāh to grant him the ability to fulfil the requirements by adding "*Insha Allāh*" to his promise as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did.

{15} The teacher has the right to attach conditions to the studies of the student. The student is then obliged to abide by these after he has accepted them. He would, of course, be forgiven if he forgets. If he does forget, he should offer his reason to the teacher and ask for forgiveness.

{16} Despite accepting the conditions of the teacher, the student should correct the teacher when he contradicts the Shari'ah. Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام admitted that he forgot the first time, he intentionally objected to the killing of the boy. This also proves that a person is obliged to object to anything that violates the Shari'ah even though he has undertaken a restraining promise of some kind.

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه writes that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام seemed to have promised Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام that he would be patient through all conditions, as long as these did not contravene the Shari'ah.

{17} The teacher has the right to admonish the student when need be. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام the first time, *"Did I not say that you will be unable to bear with me?"* On the second occasion, Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام told him, *"Did I not tell you that you will not be able to bear with me?"* The second statement was more emphatic and assertive than the first because the error had been repeated.

{18} When the student realises that he can no longer remain with the teacher, he should seek permission to leave, as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"if I question you about anything after this, then you need not remain with me. You have received an excuse from me."* He gave Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام the choice in the matter and did not just leave on his own.

{19} When a student has to leave his teacher, the teacher should ensure that he leaves with the facts before him. It should not be that the student leaves with negative thoughts about the teacher. In this way he will be saved from backbiting about the teacher.

{20} Even though a person's conscience is clear, he should ensure that people do not get the wrong impression about him. He must never be content with the knowledge that others will suffer for their misconceptions about him. He should clarify the matter so that no person is guilty of the sin of backbiting and harbouring ill thoughts merely because of a misunderstanding.

{21} When a person is in dire straits he may ask for assistance, as the two did when they asked the people of the town for food.

{22} It is permissible to ask remuneration for one's labour, as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, *"If you wished, you could have taken payment for this."*

{23} Muslim reports the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying that the people of the town in question were wicked, but behaving correctly towards wicked people is a noble trait of the righteous [*like Sayyidina Khidr* عليه السلام].

{24} The story also teaches us that ferrying people across water is permissible trade. Another lesson learnt from this episode is that people may still be termed as being poor or destitute ("Miskīn"), even though they may have some means of earning a living.

{25} It is Forbidden *(Harām)* to usurp any person's property and a person will be greatly rewarded for protecting another from the tyranny of an oppressor.

{26} It is also learnt that the children of pious people must be treated well. It is for this reason that the pious people always have a high regard for the children of other pious persons, even though the children may not, be as pious as their parents.

{27} Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was greatly upset at the killing of the boy, as mentioned by a narration of Muslim. It was then that he decided that he could no longer bear to be with Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام.

This incident raises certain questions about whether the killing of the boy

was justified according to the Shari'ah, and whether the reason given by Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was acceptable in the Shari'ah? In reply one should understand that the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام differed from ours. Therefore, one cannot base one's judgement upon our Shari'ah.

More conclusively, the reply would be that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was merely carrying out Allāh' s command - and none can object to that. This is confirmed by the statement of Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام when he told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام at the end, *"I did not carry out these actions of my own accord."*

{28} *"So they proceeded until they met a boy whom he killed. Mūsa عليه السلام burst out, 'Have you killed an innocent soul that has not taken another soul?"'* This verse appears to imply that (Qisās) *(the death penalty)* will apply to an immature child if he is guilty of murder. However, it should again be borne in mind that the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was different from ours. Retaliation *(Qisās)* does not apply to immature children in our Shari'ah.

{29} *"Fat'hul Bāri"* (*v. 8 p. 421*) reports from Ibn Juraij رحمة الله عليه and others that Allāh blessed the parents of the boy with an extremely pious daughter. A narration of Nasaī states that this daughter was the mother of a Prophet عليه السلام.

A narration of Ibn Abi Hātim reports that the Holy Prophet born to her was Sayyidina Sham'ūn عليه السلام. He was that Prophet عليه السلام whom the Bani Isrā'īl requested, *"Appoint for us a king so that we may fight in Allāh 's way..."* According to another narration, this daughter was the mother of seventy Prophets عليهم السلام.

{30} Men of knowledge grieve at the loss of knowledge. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم related the words, *"This is the parting between us,"* he said, *"May Allāh have mercy on Mūsa. If only he had been patient, then he could have reported to us more about the two of them."* [Bukhari p. 23]

Muslim (*v. 2 p. 271*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"If he had been patient, he could have seen more surprises, but he was embarrassed to keep questioning his companion."*

{31} The incident also teaches us that it is permissible to accept favours from disbelievers, just like the two accepted the free ride on the boat and asked the people of the town for food.

{32} A person will not be regarded as being intolerant if he expresses his difficulty to a friend, just as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام, *"Without doubt, this journey has been extremely wearisome for us."*

{33} Permission does not have to be sought to render assistance to another, just as Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام assisted the ferrymen and the two orphans. However, this will not apply if the person being assisted is extremely foolish and lacking in understanding.

{34} Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, *"We intended that their Lord replace for them children who are better than he in purity and affection."* Another interpretation of this verse is that the parents will be more affectionate towards the other children.

{35} A pious daughter is better than an irreligious son.

{36} Although everything occurs by the will of Allāh, it is best and most respectful not to attribute unpleasant happenings to Allāh, like Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام said, *"I wished to damage it (because) there was a king ahead of them who forcefully seized possession of every boat."*

However, when an event is pleasant, it is most appropriate to attribute it directly to Allāh, like Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام did when he said, *"We intended that their Lord replace for them children who are better than he in purity and affection,"* and *"your Lord intended that they come of age and excavate their treasure. This is the mercy of your Lord."*

{37} No person can claim that he murdered another for certain legitimate reasons because his spiritual mentor had also done so. When a person is proven to be guilty of murder, Relatiation *(Qisās)* will be enforced irrespective of the motive for the murder. The case of Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was different because he was acting under the direct command of Allāh.

{38} It is sufficient to use just a few words when expressing something that will be understood without elaboration. Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام sufficed to say, *"there was a king ahead of them who forcefully seized possession. of every boat."* It is obvious that the king will seize only those boats that are in serviceable condition. This fact is understood without the need to mention it.

{39} Like Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, there are many people whom Allāh has appointed to carry out certain actions to maintain the system of the physical world. Regarding this subject Sheikh Abdul Aziz Dabbāgh رحمة الله عليه has written a book titled *"Tabrīz Ibrīz"* and Allāma Jalālud Dīn رحمة الله عليه has penned a work called ***"Khairud Dāl Ala Wujūdil Qutubi Wal Awtād Wan Nujaba Wal Abdāl"***.

The *"Musnad of Ahmad"* reports that when the Leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*, Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه, arrived in Iraq he was asked to curse the people of Syria *(Shām)*. He replied, *"I shall never do so. I have heard the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *say, 'The Abdāl are in Shām. They are forty individuals whom Allāh replaces with another whenever one passes away. It is by virtue of their presence that the people of Shām receive rain, are victorious over their enemies and are saved from punishment.'"*

{40} Some commentators have mentioned that the town where Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام asked for food was Antioch. Others say that it was Īla, others say it was Spain, some refer to a place called Nāsira and another group say it was town called Būqa. While it is not possible to attach a definite name to the place, the famous opinion is that it was Antioch, a place in southern Turkey, on the border of Syria.

A story is narrated that some people from Antioch once offered Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه a substantial amount of money to alter the Arabic word *"abou"* into *"atou"* in the verse, *". . .they asked for food, but the people refused to host them..."* The alteration would change the meaning completely and mean that they played host to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. They claimed that the verse ruined their reputation as long as it remained in the Qur'ān.

Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه told them that it was now too late. He told them that if the people of their town had even offered a few grains of food to the two travellers, the Qur'ān would have said that they did act as hosts.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 6*) states that these people came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with some gold as payment. Another narration says that they came to Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه when he was the Leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn).*

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes thereafter that the incident is baseless and even if it were true, it would confirm the lack of intelligence of these people and that they actually fitted the description of being wicked (as mentioned by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

{41} It occurred that the ferrymen easily repaired the boat after the tyrannical king passed by. Because of the presence of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام on the boat, Allāh caused it not to fill with water while they were aboard.

"Fat'hul Bāri" (*v. 8 p. 419*) reports that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام informed the ferrymen that he intended to damage their boat, telling them that it was for their own good. They consented to the action. Another narration has it that only Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saw him do what he did and that the others would not have consented to it.

{42} The commands that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام received from Allāh were a revelation to him and not just "Ilhām" (inspiration). "Ilhām" that contradicts the Shari'ah cannot be condoned at all. One can therefore not kill a person or damage someone's property claiming that one was commanded to do so by *"Ilhām"*. The author of *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* (*v. 15 p. 17*) quotes Allāma Sha'rāni رحمة الله عليه as saying that many people have gone astray in this regard and they are leading others astray as well.

{43} Many ignorant so-called "pious ones" claim that the Shari'ah does not apply to "Tarīqa" (the practices of ascetism and sufism). They fail to perceive that Tarīqa is subject to the Shari'ah and that every saint and sufi has to follow the Shari'ah without exception. The person who fails to adhere to the obligatories *(Farā'idh)* and Compulsories of the Shari'ah will be regarded as a sinner.

People who claim that they or their 'Sheikh' need not follow the Shari'ah are disbelievers and can never be followed. Those people are also disbelievers who say that they need not comply with the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that there are other ways that can be observed besides the laws brought by them.

{44} It is blasphemous and an act of disbeliefs to believe that the Shari'ah applies only to the masses. Some people have been heard to say that the Shari'ah does not apply to those knowledgeable people who have clean hearts and upon whose hearts divine knowledge descends. They say that these people are able to follow the dictates of the special knowledge that is revealed to them. This belief is totally heretical and sacrilegious.

{45} According to the wording of the verses, no mention is made of

Sayyidina Yusha عليه السلام after he found Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام with Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه writes in "Fat'hul Bāri" (*v. 1 p. 220*) that it is possible that he did accompany the two, but is not mentioned because he was merely following Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. At the same time, the possibility also exists that he did not accompany them at all.

{46} Mention was made previously of how Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام got the title of "Khidr." However, Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه has written that his real name was Balya, while other commentators maintain that it was Kalyān. His cognomen was Abul Abbās and his father was a king called Malkān. His father is a descendant of Sām, one of the sons of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. [*Commentary of Muslim v. 2 p. 269*]

{47} There exists a difference of opinion with regard to whether Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was the Holy Prophet or a Wali (pious person). Sayyidina Abu Hayyān رحمة الله عليه has recorded in his exegesis *(tafsīr)* that most Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that he was the Holy Prophet. In support of this opinion, he quotes the parting statement of Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, where he said, *'I did not carry out these actions of my own accord."* It will be farfetched to assume that he received his instructions from another Prophet عليه السلام.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was such a Prophet that was not sent to any particular nation with a message. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه supports this opinion, judging from the talks that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام had with Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. [*Isāba v. 1 p. 43011*]

{48} Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has written in "Fat'hul Bāri" (*v. 1 p. 221*) that many ignorant people say that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was superior in status to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. These people merely look at this isolated incident and forget that Allāh spoke directly to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and that he was given the Torah, which contained the knowledge of all things.

They have also forgotten that all the Prophets عليهم السلام of the Bani Isrā'īl after Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, including Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, followed his Shari'ah. In this regard Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام will be superior in status to Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, because the latter did not receive a Shari'ah of his own. Even if it assumed that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام did receive a Shari'ah, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام would still be superior because his apostleship was greater and his Ummah was larger.

If Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was a Wali, then the person who says that he is superior to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام will be a disbeliever because the entire Ummah is unanimous that any Prophet is superior to any Wali.

Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was superior in status, he was sent to learn from Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام as a test and a lesson, so that he may not unconditionally claim to be the most knowledgeable person. [*"Fat'hul Bāri" v. 1 p. 221*]

{49} Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has written approximately 18 pages in his book "Isāba" on the topic of whether Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام is alive presently or not. He first quotes the proofs of those who claim that he has passed away. The strongest of their proofs is a hadith of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in which

he once told the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم after the Isha Salāh, 'None of the people presently upon the back of the earth will be alive after a hundred years." Bukhari has narrated this hadith in three places.

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has quoted Imām Nawawi رحمة الله عليه as saying that the majority of the Scholars *(Ulama)* are against this opinion and say that at the time when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, this hadith Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was at sea, and therefore exempted from the general intention of the words "upon the back of the earth."

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه has also quoted from Hāfiz Ibnul Jowzi رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made the following supplication *(du'ā)* before the battle of Badr i.e. "O Allāh! If you wish, you would not be.worshipped after this day." Muslim (*v. 2 p. 84*) narrates the supplication *(du'ā)* as follows: "O Allāh! If you so wish, you would not be worshipped on earth." (i.e. If the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم are destroyed in the battle, there would be none to worship Allāh).

He deduces from this that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام must have already passed away when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made this supplication *(du'ā)* because he was certainly a worshipper of Allāh. Even if the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم were annihilated in the battle, he would still have been alive to worship Allāh.

Another proof for his death is that if he were alive he would have certainly met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and believed in him as Allāh's messenger. However, this proof holds no weight because he could have met the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without our knowledge. The absence of a narration to this effect does not negate the occurrence.

Thereafter, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه narrates the proofs of those who claim that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام was alive during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and after him as well. None of these are reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself, many are extremely unreliable, while there are those that are fabricated.

One of the narrations are extracted from "Kitābul Mujālisa", in which Sayyidina Umar bin Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه is reported to have said that he had seen Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام walking hastily. A narration from the "Tarīkh" of Ya'qūb bin Sufyān رحمة الله عليه states that Sayyidina Umar bin Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه said, "I met my brother Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام and he conveyed to me the glad tidings that I shall be in charge of the peoples' affairs and that I shall be just." Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه says that this was the most authentic narration regarding this subject. [*Isābah v. 1 p. 480*]

He then quotes Abu Hayyān رحمة الله عليه as saying that one of the narrators of his hadith [viz. Abdul Wāhid Abbāsi Hambali رحمة الله عليه] is known by his students as having personally met Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه says that he also met many people who claim to have met Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. Of these is Qādhi Ilmud Dīn Basāti رحمة الله عليه, who was the chief justice during the reign of the king Zāhir Barqūq.

Imām Bayhaqi رحمة الله عليه has reported in "Dalā'ilun Nabuwwa" *(v. 7 p. 268)* that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away, the people of his house heard a voice from a corner of the room saying, "O people of the home! Peace be

on you, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings. There is undoubtedly consolation in the Being of Allāh from every calamity, a replacement for every destroyed thing, and compensation for every lost thing. (i.e. Despite all the losses in life, it should be borne in mind that Allāh is still Ever Present, so seek assistance from Him). So trust only in Allāh and pin your hopes in Him Alone, because the person who is truly afflicted by a calamity is he who is deprived of reward."

Upon hearing this, Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه asked the people if they recognised the voice. He then informed them that the speaker was Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. [*Mishkāt p. 549*]

Many Muhaddithīn, including Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه, strongly oppose the belief that Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام is alive and their opinion cannot be conclusively rebutted. Both parties have their proofs. The subject is not one on which any law of Shari'ah is based, neither will it affect a person's belief *(Imān)* in any way. Allāh knows best.

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَن ذِى ٱلْقَرْنَيْنِ ۖ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُم مِّنْهُ ذِكْرًا (83) إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُۥ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ سَبَبًا (84) فَأَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا (85) حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِى عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِندَهَا قَوْمًا ۗ قُلْنَا يَٰذَا ٱلْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّآ أَن تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّآ أَن تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا (86) قَالَ أَمَّا مَن ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُۥ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِۦ فَيُعَذِّبُهُۥ عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا (87) وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَهُۥ جَزَآءً ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُۥ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا (88) ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا (89) حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ ٱلشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ لَّمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُم مِّن دُونِهَا سِتْرًا (90) كَذَٰلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا (91) ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا (92) حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ ٱلسَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَّا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا (93) قَالُوا۟ يَٰذَا ٱلْقَرْنَيْنِ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلَىٰٓ أَن تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا (94) قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّى فِيهِ رَبِّى خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِى بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا (95) ءَاتُونِى زُبَرَ ٱلْحَدِيدِ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ ٱلصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ ٱنفُخُوا۟ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَعَلَهُۥ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِىٓ أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا (96) فَمَا ٱسْطَٰعُوٓا۟ أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا ٱسْتَطَٰعُوا۟ لَهُۥ نَقْبًا (97) قَالَ هَٰذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّى جَعَلَهُۥ دَكَّآءَ ۖ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّى حَقًّا (98) ۞ وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِى بَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُفِخَ فِى ٱلصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَٰهُمْ جَمْعًا (99) وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْكَٰفِرِينَ عَرْضًا (100) ٱلَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِى غِطَآءٍ عَن ذِكْرِى وَكَانُوا۟ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا (101)

(83) They ask you about Dhul Qarnain. Tell them, "I shall shortly make mention of him to you. (84) We verily granted him kingship on earth and gave him every type of asset. (85) So he journeyed on a road... (86) Until he reached the place where the sun sets. He found it setting in a black spring, where he found a nation. We told him. "O Dhul Qarnain! Either you punish them or you adopt a kind attitude towards them." (87) He said, "As for him who oppresses, we shall soon punish him and then return him to his Lord, Who will punish him most severely." (88) "As for him who believes and does good deeds, his shall be a most beautiful reward. And we will speak mildly of him with regard to our affairs." (89) He then journeyed on a road... (90) Until he reached the place where the sun rose, he found it rising upon a nation to whom We had not given any veil against it. (91) This is how it was, and We surely had knowledge of everything that he possessed. (92) He then journeyed on a road... (93) Until he reached between two mountain, he found nearby a nation who could barely understand anything. (94) They submitted, "O Dhul Qarnain! The Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj spread anarchy on earth, so is it possible that we collect some money for you so that you may erect a barrier between us and them?" (95) He replied, "The power and authority that my Lord has vested in me is better, so assist me with strength and I shall erect a fortified wall between you and them. (96) "Bring me some pieces of iron." When these were levelled between the cliffs, he commanded, "Blow!" When it was made into fire, he said, "Bring me molten copper to pour over it." (97) They were not able to scale it, neither were they able to make a hole in it. (98) He said, "This is a mercy from my Lord. When the promise of my Lord will come, He will shatter it to pieces. The promise of my Lord is ever true. (99) On that day We will leave the criminals to surge against each other, the trumpet will be blown and We will gather them all. (100) On that day We will present Hell before the disbelievers. (101) Those whose eyes were veiled from My remembrance and they were unable to hear.

THE STORY OF DHUL QARNAIN, HIS TRAVELS AND THE ERECTION OF A WALL TO STOP THE GOG *(YA'JŪJ)* AND MAGOG *(MA'JŪJ)*

It has already been mentioned that the Jews told the polytheists to pose three questions to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as a test of his apostleship. The question regarding the soul was answered in Surah Bani Isrā'īl and the question about the people of the cave has also been discussed. Now Allāh discusses the story of Dhul Qarnain.

Questions are often asked about who was Dhul Qarnain, where were the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* and where is the wall that Dhul Qarnain erected? These questions fill the minds of people. Although a believer *(Mu'min)* should not be affected by these questions and be satisfied with what the Qur'ān explains, people nowadays are accustomed to research and investigation.

WHO WAS DHUL QARNAIN, WHAT WAS HIS REAL NAME AND WHY WAS HE GIVEN THE TITLE OF "DHUL QARNAIN?"

Some people have mentioned that Dhul Qarnain was Alexander of Macedonia, whose advisor was the philosopher Aristotle. However, the research

scholars have refuted this notion because Dhul Qarnain is described in the Qur'ān as a pious believer *(Mu'min)* (in fact, some Scholars *(Ulama)* say that he was the Prophet).

It is well known that Alexander of Macedonia was a tyrant and founded the city of Alexandria in Egypt. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه also mentions that Alexander reigned long after Dhul Qarnain. He lived approximately three hundred years before Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. He killed Darius III and disgraced the Persian royalty.

Thereafter Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه writes, "We have clarified the point because many people believe that the Dhul Qarnain mentioned in the Qur'ān is the same Dhul Qarnain whose advisor was Aristotle.

This notion causes many errors and associated evils because the first one was a believer *(Mu'min)* and a just ruler, whose advisor was Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام. He was also a Prophet, as we have already established. The second was a polytheist and his advisor was a philosopher. There was also a period of two thousand years between the two..."

Thereafter Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه presents several opinions about the real name of Dhul Qarnain. These are:

(1) Abdullāh bin Dahhāk bin Ma'd

(2) Mus'ab bin Abdullah bin Qattān

(3) Marzubān bin Marzaba

(4) Sa'b bin Dhi Marā'id

(5) Harmas

(6) Hardīs

He also states that Dhul Qarnain was from the progeny of Sām, the son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. He states further that he belonged to the Bani Himyar tribe. Whatever the case, the difference of opinion regarding his name does not affect the purpose of the incident.

Ibn Kathīr reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that Dhul Qarnain was a Prophet and he reports from Is'hāq bin Bishr رحمة الله عليه that his advisor was Sayyidina Khidr عليه السلام, who also doubled as the leader of the reconnoitring section of Dhul Qarnain's army.

He also quotes Azraq رحمة الله عليه as saying that Dhul Qarnain accepted Islām at the hands of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. He performed tawāf with Sayyidina Ibrahīm and Isma'īl عليه السلام. He performed the Hajj on foot and, when Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was informed of his arrival, he welcomed him and made pray *(du'ā)* for him. Allāh also made the clouds subservient to him and he could take them wherever he pleased.

The Arabic word "Qarnain" denotes two horns or two centuries. "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 24*) quotes eleven opinions concerning the reason for the title of Dhul Qarnain (*"The one who possesses two horns or two centuries"*). Of these many are incorrect. Of those that seem appropriate is that he was titled in this manner

because he reigned for two centuries.

Another opinion states that he had two horns on his head like goats have. He is reported to be the first person to wear a turban to hide these horns. Others state that he was titled likewise because his crown had two horns. A fourth opinion is that he was given the title because of his extensive travels to the east and the west, both directions denoting a horn.

HIS JOURNEY TO WEST

Allāh says, *"They ask you about Dhul Qarnain. Tell them, 'I shall shortly make mention of him to you. We verily granted him kingship on earth and gave him every type of asset."* Allāh granted him everything that he required to rule his kingdom efficiently.

"So he journeyed on a road (to the west)." En route he conquered many territories and continued *"Until he reached the place where the sun sets* (a place that was the furthest westerly settlement). *He found it setting in a black spring..."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 32*) mentions that this refers to a spring within the sea, or to the sea itself. The word *"spring"* can very well refer to the ocean because it is as minute as a spring when compared to Allāh's great power and kingdom.

A *"black spring"* would mean that he saw the sun setting upon a coastline that appeared to be black because of its vastness (and distance). Of course, the sun never actually sets in the sea, but the sight appears to portray this.

In this westerly territory *"he found a nation. We told him, 'O Dhul Qarnain! Either you punish them* [by putting them to the sword because of their adherence to disbeliefs after receiving the message of (Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)] or you adopt a kind attitude towards them* (by repeating the message to them and allowing them to accept)."

Dhul Qarnain opted to first invite them to belief *(Imān)*. *"He said, 'As for him who oppresses (by rejecting to believe), we shall soon punish him and then return him to his Lord, Who will punish him most severely."*

He continued to say, *"As for him who believes and does good deeds, his shall be a most beautiful reward. And we will speak mildly of him with regard to our affairs."* i.e. He will not be imposed upon, neither verbally nor physically.

HIS JOURNEY TO THE EAST

Allāh says further, *"He then journeyed on a road* (to the east)." He continued on his journey *"Until he reached the place where the sun rose..."* i.e. He journeyed to the furthest easterly settlement.

When he reached this place, he noticed that the sun rose *"upon a nation to whom We had not given any veil against it."* These people did not live in homes or tents, but lived in the open. It is possible that the place was cold and they required the sunlight to keep themselves warm. Rain must have also been scarce and, when it did fall, they must have taken shelter under trees.

Allāh then says, *"This is how it was, and We surely had knowledge of everything that he possessed."*

Allāh does not mention in the above verse whether the people in the east were believers *(Mu'minīn)* or disbelievers, or what Dhul Qarnain did with them. If they were disbelievers, he may have treated them as he did with the people, of the west.

THE THIRD JOURNEY

"He then journeyed on a road until he reached between two mountains, he found nearby a nation who could barely understand anything." These people were terrified for the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* tribe.

"They submitted, "O Dhul Qarnain! The Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj spread anarchy on earth, so is it possible that we collect some money for you so that you may erect a barrier between us and them?"'

HOW WAS THE WALL CONSTRUCTED?

When these people requested Dhul Qarnain to build a barricade between themselves and the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*, *"He replied,* '(You need not pay me anything because) *The power and authority that my Lord has vested in me is better* (than what you can give to me), *so assist me with strength* (i.e. manpower and support) *and I shall erect a fortified wall between you and them."*

Dhul Qarnain told the people, *"Bring me some pieces of iron."* The iron was used as bricks, while wood and coal were used as mortar. Allāh then continues, *"When these were levelled between the cliffs* (and the valley was barricaded), *he commanded, 'Blow!"* The author of "Jalālain" says that some instruments were used to blow to stimulate combustion.

Eventually *"When it* (the iron) *was made into fire..."* The iron melted and the pieces joined together to form a solid wall on its own. This was sufficient in itself, yet Dhul Qarnain fortified it further. He then instructed the people saying, *"Bring me molten copper to pour over it."* When the molten copper was poured over the iron wall, it filled all the gaps and covered the wall.

Because of the height, strength and smoothness of the wall the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* *"were not able to scale it, neither were they able to make a hole in it."*

After completing the wall Dhul Qarnain said to the people, *"This is a mercy from my Lord."* It was mercy from Allāh that he was accorded the honour of completing this great feat and it was because of His mercy that these people were now safe from the harassment of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*.

Dhul Qarnain continued to tell the people, *"When the promise of my Lord will come, He will shatter it to pieces. The promise of my Lord is ever true."* Allāh shall cause the wall to be shattered when He decides.

Some commentators have mentioned that the *'promise"* refers to the day of Judgement. Others say that this *'promise"* refers to the time when the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* are destined to escape from the valley. The second opinion is more suitable in the context of the next verse that (according to many commentators) refers to the emergence of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*.

The emergence of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* is a sign of *Judgment day (Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"Until the time arrives when the Gog (Ya'jūj) and Magog (Ma'jūj) will be released and they will scurry down every hill."* [*Surah 21, verse 96*]

"On that day We will leave the criminals to surge against each other..." The Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* will break out from captivity and spread on earth in great haste. According to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه, this verse refers to the emergence of all creation from their graves on the day of Judgement. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 43*]

"..... the trumpet will be blown and We will gather them all. On that day We will present Hell before the disbelievers." Then Allāh describes the disbelievers by saying that they are *"Those whose eyes were veiled from My remembrance and they were unable to hear."*

Allāh depicts the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* because the Jews and the polytheists of Makkah were stubborn and refused to believe in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even after he had recounted these incidents to them upon their demand. Allāh tells them that they will never be able to escape on the day of Judgement and they will all receive their due punishment.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE GOG *(YA'JŪJ)* AND MAGOG *(MA'JŪJ)* BEFORE *JUDGMENT (QIYĀMAH)*

We shall repeat what Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, viz. *"Until the time arrives when the Gog (Ya'jūj) and Magog (Ma'jūj) will be released and they will scurry down every hill."* [*Surah 21, verse 96*]

Muslim (*v. 2 p. 393*) reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* shall never dawn until ten signs appear. These are:

1. *People are swallowed by the earth in the east.*
2. *People are also swallowed in the west.*
3. *This incident occurs in the Arabian peninsula as well.*
4. *Smoke appears.*
5. *Dajjāl makes his appearance.*
6. *The 'creature of the earth' appears (this is a type of animal that will emerge from the ground. Mention will be made' of this in Surah Naml).*
7. *The emergence of Gog (Ya'jūj) and Magog (Ma'jūj).*
8. *The rising of the sun from the west.*
9. *A fire will rage from Aden (and drive people towards the plains of reckoning).*
10. *The descent of Sayyidina Isā* عليه السلام *from the heavens.*

Muslim (*v. 2 p. 401*) sheds more light on the emergence of Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*. It is recorded from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that after Dajjāl

is killed by Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and he lives among the people, Allāh will send the following revelation to him: "O Isā! I shall release such servants of Mine against whom none can fight. Therefore take My [Believer *(Mu'min)*] servants to Mount Tūr for safety."

Consequently Allāh will release them *"and they will scurry down every hill."* Their numbers will be so large that when the first part of their army will pass by the lake of Tabariyya, they will finish all the water and, when the later part of their army will pass by, they will say, *"It seems that there was once water here."* Allāma Yaqūt Hamawi رحمة الله عليه reports from Allāma Azhari رحمة الله عليه that this lake measured ten miles in length and six miles in breadth during his time.

When they will reach the Khamar Mountain in Baitul Muqaddas, they will say, "We have killed all on earth. Let us now kill those in the heavens." They will then fire their arrows to the skies and Allāh will cause these to return with blood on them.

In the meantime, the believers *(Mu'minīn)* with Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will be so hard pressed for food in the Tūr mountain that the head of a bull will be more valuable to them than a hundred gold coins. Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will implore Allāh to destroy the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj and Allāh will afflict them with a disease that normally kills goats and camels when it erupts from the nose. It will erupt from their necks and kill them all as if they were one person.

Their corpses will be scattered about as if a wild animal ravaged them. When Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will descend from the mountain they will not find a single place that is free from the bodies and stench of the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj. They will then again supplicate to Allāh whereupon Allāh will send large birds with necks like camels. These birds will cast all the corpses away to where Allāh wills. Thereafter Allāh will send a light rain that will fall on every part of the earth, washing it as clean as if it is a mirror.

Allāh will then command the earth to bring forth its vegetation and provisions. It will then spill forth everything and produce all its fruits. As a result of this blessings, a group of people will be able to eat from a single pomegranate and they will be able to make umbrellas from the skin of a pomegranate.

There will be so much blessings in milk that a large gathering of people will be able to fill themselves with the milk of one camel. In a like manner, a large tribe will be able to satisfy themselves with the milk of a cow, and a smaller tribe will require the milk of only a goat to fill themselves.

Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will then be very close and the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will enjoy extremely comfortable lives. Since Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* can dawn only upon the disbelievers, Allāh will send a pleasant breeze that will reach the sides of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, causing them all to pass away. Thereafter only the worst of people will live on earth, who will commit adultery in public like donkeys. Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will dawn upon these people.

The verse of Surah Anbiya and the hadith of Muslim make it clear that the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj will emerge just before Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. First Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will descend and then Dajjāl will appear. After he is killed

by Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* will be released. This is the only correct sequence of events before Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

However, since the introduction of secular history and the study of its books and the narrations of the Jews, people have begun to draw illogical deductions. Some of them say that the Tartars and the barbaric Western nations were the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj.

These nations caused untold bloodshed and plundered many nations in Africa and Asia. Until today they spread anarchy in numerous ways. The possibility does exist that some of them are from the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj because the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj consisted of many tribes. However, the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj mentioned in the Qur'ān and the Ahdīth will certainly appear only before Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

The signs of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* are classified into two categories. The first are those that appear a long time before and the second are those that appear close to Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* and himself are like the index and middle fingers of his hand. [*Mishkāt p. 480*]

All the events mentioned above concerning the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are not apparent before us. It is therefore only logical that they could not yet have appeared on earth.

Ibn Majah reports that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم on the night of Ascension *(Mi'rāj)* that the corpses of the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj will be cast into the sea and that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* shall occur so close thereafter like a pregnant woman who is near to delivery and her family have no idea when she might surprise them with her delivery.

THE NUMBERS OF THE GOG *(YA'JŪJ)* AND MAGOG *(MA'JŪJ)*

A narration of Bukhari also tells us that the numbers of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* will be so large that they cannot be counted. In a chapter discussing the story of the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj, Imām Bukhari رحمة الله عليه quotes the verses of Surah Anbiya and Surah Kahf, followed by three Ahdīth.

In one of these Ahdīth, he reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* Allāh will instruct Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام to separate those people who are destined for Hell. When he will ask how many are they to be, Allāh will say that the people of Hell will number 999 from every 1000. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that at that moment, Upon hearing this, every youth will turn white, *"every nursing mother will forget her suckling infant and every pregnant woman will abort. And you will see people in a drunken stupor whereas they will not be drunk, but Allāh 's punishment is severe."*

When the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم heard this from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم they asked who will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* if only one from every thousand will enter. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Accept the glad tidings that the one will be from yourselves and a thousand will be from the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 472*]

This hadith informs us that the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* are from

the progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله عليه writes that the hadith illustrates the number of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* as being a thousand to one when compared to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is therefore evident that no nation has emerged thus far in such numbers.

WHO ARE THE YA'JŪJ AND MA'JŪJ AND WHERE ARE THEY?

The historian Ibn Khaldūn رحمة الله عليه writes that to the west of Ghazz and east of the cities of Kimia lies the Caucasus Mountains. He says that these mountains surround the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*.

WHERE IS THE WALL CONSTRUCTED BY DHUL QARNAIN?

Historians have written that the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* attacked and plundered many places and many walls were erected as barricades against them. One of these is that Great Wall of China. However, this is definitely not the wall constructed by Dhul Qarnain. The Great Wall of China cannot be the wall of Dhul Qarnain because the wall of Dhul Qarnain is established to be made of iron and copper.

Another similar wall is found in Asia, close to Russia, in a district called Darbind. A third such wall is found in Dagestan and is famously known as Darbind or Bābul Abwāb. The fourth is found to the west of Dagestan and is between two mountains. This is close to the Caucasian Mountains and many historians believe that this is the wall built by Dhul Qarnain. However, any wall that is not built of iron and copper cannot be the wall of Dhul Qarnain.

Allāma Yaqūt Hamawi رحمة الله عليه writes in his book "Mu'jamul Buldān" that the Caliph *(Khalifa)* Wāthiq Billah dispatched an expedition of fifty men with five thousand gold coins. En route, Falakul Jazar joined five guides with them. They came across a steep mountain in which there was a valley that spanned 150 arm-lengths. They found a wall of iron bricks spanning the width of this valley, between which they noticed copper. The height of the wall was fifty hand-lengths and it also had an iron door with a lock. The expedition then left the place and reached the town Surra Man Ra'ā after eight months.

After quoting this and other narrations in three pages, Allāma Hamawi رحمة الله عليه says that he got the information from other books without being able to verify their authenticity. Only Allāh knows the location of the wall, but its existence is certain.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has also recounted the above expedition of Wāthiq Billah and Ibn Khaldūn has also referred to it on p. 79. However, the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 42*) has mentioned that the reliable historians have declared the incident to be unauthentic. He says that any person with in-depth knowledge will acknowledge that there are many untruths in the story that contradict the verses of the Qur'ān.

The claim of the disbelievers that they have explored the earth and have not found this wall does not nullify the existence of the wall. This is so because the possibility is great that they did not yet explore every part of the world.

In the past they thought that Asia, Africa and Europe made up the entire

world. However, they realised their folly when Çolumbus (or Vespucci?) accidentally discovered America and thought that it was India. It was only long thereafter that they discovered Australia. In a like manner, they have yet to discover the territory of the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj.

No Islāmic belief depends upon the knowledge of where the wall and the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are located. This knowledge will not even affect a person's understanding of the Qur'ān. Therefore it will not be necessary to delve deeply into the matter. A believer *(Mu'min)* believes in what Allāh has revealed without question.

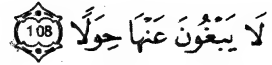
THE WORDS "YA'JŪJ" AND "MA'JŪJ" ARE NOT ARABIC

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" and other historians and commentators have mentioned that the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)* were descendants of Yāfith, the son of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Some Muslim researchers have mentioned that two tribes living behind the Qafqāz Mountains are called the Ya'qūq and the Ma'qūq. In converting these two words to Arabic, the Arabs have coined the words Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*.

Others have mentioned that the original form of these words was Gog and Magog, Kās and Mikās, or Chīn and Machīn. Whatever the original, it is evident that the words were never Arabic, but transformations into Arabic. However, some people have justified their belief that these words are originally Arabic. And Allāh knows best.

Note: It has already been established from the narration of Bukhari that the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are humans and that all of them will be cast into Hell. Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has mentioned the objection which states that they cannot be punished when no Prophet has preached to them. This is in conformance to the verse where Allāh says, *"We shall not punish (any nation) until We send a messenger (to them)."* [*Surah Bani Isrā'īl (17), verse 15*]

The reply to this objection is that the word *"messenger"* in this verse may refer to the Prophet or to any messenger or disciple of a Prophet. Allāh may have sent such people to them as well. The fact that we are unaware of this does not mean that it never occurred.

أَفَحَسِبَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَن يَتَّخِذُواْ عِبَادِى مِن دُونِىٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۚ إِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَٰفِرِينَ نُزُلًا
﴿102﴾ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُم بِٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَٰلًا ﴿103﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ
أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿104﴾ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَآئِهِۦ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَٰلُهُمْ فَلَا
نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَزْنًا ﴿105﴾ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ بِمَا كَفَرُواْ وَٱتَّخَذُوٓاْ ءَايَٰتِى وَرُسُلِى هُزُوًا
﴿106﴾ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴿107﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا

(102) Do the disbelievers think that they can exclude Me to take My slaves as assistants? Without doubt, We have prepared Hell as a reception for the disbelievers. (103) Say, "Should we inform you of those who are the worst losers in terms of their deeds? (104) They are those whose efforts are destroyed in this worldly life while they think that they are carrying out good deeds. (105) These are the ones who disbelieve in the verses of their Lord and in meeting with Him. So their deeds are wasted and no weight will be attached to them on the Day of Judgment. (106) This punishment of Hell will be their retribution because of their disbelief and because they ridiculed My verses and My messengers. (107) As for those who believe and do good deeds, Gardens of Paradise (Jannātul Firdous) shall be their reception. (108) They will abide therein forever and will never want to leave it.

THE DISBELIEVER IS THE GREATEST LOSER AND ALL HIS DEEDS WILL BE WASTED AND WEIGHTLESS

Allāh speaks of the disbelievers in these verses and asks, *"Do the disbelievers think that they can exclude Me to take My slaves as assistants?"* Foolishly thinking that they are doing right, they do not realise that *"Without doubt, We have prepared Hell as a reception for the disbelievers."*

The disbelievers are of a few types. There are those who totally refute the existence of Allāh and apply themselves only to acquiring the things of this world. Then there are those who believe in Allāh, but associate others as partner to Him. They adhere to other religions *(Dīn's)* instead of the true religion *(Dīn)* taught by Allāh.

There are also those disbelievers who exert themselves in various spiritual exercises in the name of worship. The deeds of all these people are wasted because they will not receive any rewards for them in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Say, 'Should we inform you of those who are the worst losers in terms of their deeds? They are those whose efforts are destroyed in this worldly life while they think that they are carrying out good deeds."*

Describing them further Allāh says, *"These are the ones who disbelieve in the verses of their Lord and in meeting with Him. So their deeds are wasted and no weight will be attached to them on the Day of Judgement."*

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that many people will appear healthy and plump on the Day of Judgement, but they will not even weigh as much as the wing of as mosquito in Allāh's estimation. In support of his statement, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then recited the verse, *"no weight will be attached to them on the Day of Judgement"* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 691*]. The person will appear in this manner as a personification of his worldly status, position and affluence.

Some commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that these people will have no standing and position before Allāh. Others say that for such people no scale will be erected to weigh their deeds on the Day of Judgement. They will

be dispatched to Hell without their deeds being weighed. The opinions of the Scholars *(Ulama)* with regard to the scales have been mentioned in the commentary of verse 8 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says, *"The weighing on that day is the truth! As for him whose scale is heavy, these will be the successful ones."*

People envy the lives of the rich and famous and are overawed at the publicity that these people enjoy. Even their deaths are globally publicised. However, few ever reflect upon whether the person dies as a believer *(Mu'min)* or a disbeliever. If he dies as a disbeliever, his plight is most pitiable because he will suffer in the grave, in the 50,000 year duration of the Day of Judgement, and then eternally in Hell. All this popularity will be of no avail to them after they die. Everything will be wasted.

Allāh says in verse 18 of Surah Ibrahīm (*Surah 14*), *"The example of the actions of those who disbelieve in their Lord is like that of ashes that are blown away by a wind on a stormy day. They have absolutely no control over what they earn. This is a distant deviation."*

Just as there remains no trace of the ashes, there shall be no trace of their actions, this includes even the extreme spiritual exercises performed by the Hindu Sādhūs and the Christian monks.

Finally Allāh says, *"This punishment of Hell will be their retribution because of their disbelief and because they ridiculed My verses and My messengers."*

GARDENS OF PARADISE *(JANNĀTUL FIRDOUS)* ARE PROMISED FOR THE BELIEVERS WHO DO GOOD DEEDS

"As for those who believe and do good deeds, Gardens of Paradise *(Jannātul Firdous) shall be their reception."* The Arabic word "Janāt" is the plural of Heaven *(Jannah)*, which refers to a garden and, more specifically, to the garden of Paradise.

"Firdous" has been termed by many commentators to be a Roman or Hebrew word that means 'a garden.' According to other commentators, it is an Ethiopian word referring to an extremely densely foliaged garden. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 16*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person should always pray for Gardens of Paradise *(Jannātul Firdous)* because it is the highest rank of Heaven *(Jannah)*. Above it lies the throne of Allāh, and all four rivers of Heaven *(Jannah)* have their source therein. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 391*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" then makes mention of an objection. The objection states that if everyone reached Gardens of Paradise *(Jannātul Firdous)* how would the different ranks of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* be differentiated? The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" says that Gardens of Paradise *(Jannātul Firdous)* refers to the entire Heaven *(Jannah)* and every person will attain to the rank that is promised to him.

"They will abide therein forever and will never want to leave it." This is so because there is no better place. Allāh says in Surah Hijr, *"No difficulty shall afflict*

them there, neither will they be removed from there." [*Surah 15, verse 48*]

قُل لَّوْ كَانَ ٱلْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَٰتِ رَبِّى لَنَفِدَ ٱلْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَن تَنفَدَ كَلِمَٰتُ رَبِّى وَلَوْ جِئْنَا
بِمِثْلِهِۦ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾ قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَىَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا۟
لِقَآءَ رَبِّهِۦ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَٰلِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِۦٓ أَحَدًۢا ﴿١١٠﴾

(109) Say, "If the ocean was ink for the words of my Lord, the ocean would be depleted before the words of my Lord can end, even if We supplement it with a like amount of ink." (110) Say, "I am but a human being like yourselves. Revelation comes to me that your Deity is but One Deity. So whoever aspires for the meeting with his Lord should perform good deeds and not associate anyone as partner in the worship of his Lord."

THE ATTRIBUTES AND EXCELLENCE OF ALLĀH ARE LIMITLESS

In concluding the Surah, Allāh makes mention of Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, the Prophethood and those things that will benefit one in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"Say, 'If the ocean was ink for the words* (denoting the attributes and excellence) *of my Lord, the ocean would be depleted before the words of my Lord can end, even if We supplement it with a like amount of ink."* Even if all the seven oceans are transformed into ink and all the trees of the world become pens to write this, they will never be able to do so. This is similar to the verse that Allāh has mentioned of Surah Luqmān, where He says, *"If all the trees on earth were pens and the ocean was augmented by seven oceans, Allāh 's words will never be exhausted. Verily Allāh is Mighty, the Wise."* [*Surah 31, verse 27*]

This feat will not be accomplished even if the trees and the oceans were considered to be infinite. Therefore, it will be foolish to even consider ascribing anyone as partner to Allāh because none can match even one of His attributes.

A HUMAN BEING IS PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF BEING A PROPHET *(NABI)*

"Say, 'I am but a human being like yourselves. (The only difference being that) *Revelation comes to me that your Deity is but One Deity."* There is no reason why a human being cannot be a Prophet. In fact, it is best that he is human.

Allāh goes on to say, *"So whoever aspires for the meeting with his Lord* (on the Day of Judgement), *should perform good deeds* [in association with belief in all Allāh's Prophets عليهم السلام, especially in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم]. In addition to this he should *"not associate anyone as partner in the worship of his Lord."* No deed will be of help when a person is a polytheist. Only the deeds of believers *(Mu'minīn)* will be accepted by Allāh, as has already been mentioned.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SURAH MARYAM

Surah Maryam gets its name from the detailed account that verses 16 to 37 of the Surah give about Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام and her giving birth to Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Verses 1 to 15 of this Surah mention how Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام and his barren wife were blessed with a son viz. Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام.

Verses 41 to 50 speak of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, while verses 51 to 58 speak of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام, Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام. The verses thereafter discuss Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* and how people will be sent to Heaven *(Jannah)* and Hell.

سورة مريم

Makkan	Surah Maryam	Verses 98

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿ ﴾

كٓهيعٓصٓ ﴿1﴾ ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُۥ زَكَرِيَّآ ﴿2﴾ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥ نِدَآءً
خَفِيًّا ﴿3﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّى وَهَنَ ٱلْعَظْمُ مِنِّى وَٱشْتَعَلَ ٱلرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنۢ
بِدُعَآئِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴿4﴾ وَإِنِّى خِفْتُ ٱلْمَوَٰلِىَ مِن وَرَآءِى وَكَانَتِ ٱمْرَأَتِى
عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِى مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا ﴿5﴾ يَرِثُنِى وَيَرِثُ مِنْ ءَالِ يَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَٱجْعَلْهُ
رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿6﴾ يَٰزَكَرِيَّآ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَٰمٍ ٱسْمُهُۥ يَحْيَىٰ لَمْ نَجْعَل لَّهُۥ مِن
قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿7﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِى غُلَٰمٌ وَكَانَتِ ٱمْرَأَتِى عَاقِرًا وَقَدْ
بَلَغْتُ مِنَ ٱلْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ﴿8﴾ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَىَّ هَيِّنٌ وَقَدْ
خَلَقْتُكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْـًٔا ﴿9﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱجْعَل لِّىٓ ءَايَةً ۚ قَالَ
ءَايَتُكَ أَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ ٱلنَّاسَ ثَلَٰثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿10﴾ فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِۦ مِنَ
ٱلْمِحْرَابِ فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِمْ أَن سَبِّحُوا۟ بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿11﴾ يَٰيَحْيَىٰ خُذِ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ
بِقُوَّةٍ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ ٱلْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿12﴾ وَحَنَانًا مِّن لَّدُنَّا وَزَكَوٰةً ۖ وَكَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿13﴾ وَبَرًّۢا
بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ وَلَمْ يَكُن جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا ﴿14﴾ وَسَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ
يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿15﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Kāf Hā Yā Ayn Sād. (2) This is a mention of the mercy of your Lord upon His slave Zakariyya. (3) When he secretly called to his Lord. (4) He said, "O my Lord! My bones have weakened and my hair has turned white because of old age. I

have never been unfortunate in my prayers to You." (5) "I truly fear for my relatives after me and my wife is barren. So grant me an heir..." (6) "....who can succeed me and succeed the family of Ya'qūb. And, O my Lord, make him beloved unto You." (7) "O Zakariyyā, We convey to you the glad tidings of a son called Yahyā. We have never kept the same name for anyone before him." (8) He said, "O my Lord! How will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the pinnacle of old age?" (9) He said, "So it shall be. Your Lord declares, "It will be easy for Me. Indeed I have created you before whereas you were nothing. (10) He said, "O my Lord! Appoint a sign for me." He said, "Your sign shall be that you will be unable to speak to people for three nights, even though you will be healthy." (11) So he came forth unto his people from the sanctuary and gestured to them, "Engage in glorifying your Lord morning and evening." (12) O Yahya.' Hold fast on to the scripture. " We granted him command in childhood... (13) ...And (We granted him) compassion from Ourselves and purity. He was abstinent indeed. (14) He was kind to his parents and he was not rebellious nor disobedient. (15) Peace be on him the day he was born, the day that he passed away and the day when he will be resurrected.

SAYYIDINA ZAKARIYYA عليه السلام PRAYS FOR A SON AND THE SUBSEQUENT BIRTH OF SAYYIDINA YAHYA عليه السلام

Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام was the Prophet عليه السلام of the Bani Isrā'īl. When he became old, he grew concerned about the plight of his religion *(Dīn)* after him because none of his relatives were capable of continuing the duty of propagation and upholding the Torah. Therefore, according to the etiquette of supplication *(du'ā) "he secretly called to his Lord."*

"He said, 'O my Lord! My bones have weakened and my hair has turned white because of old age. I have never been unfortunate in my prayers to You. (Soon I shall be leaving this world without anyone to succeed me). I truly fear for my relatives after me and my wife is barren. So grant me an heir who can succeed me and succeed the family of Ya'qūb. And, O my Lord, make him beloved unto You."

In this manner Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام supplicated to Allāh to grant him a son so that the child can uphold the religion *(Dīn)* and continue with the legacy of the Holy Prophethood and divine knowledge. Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام was also the leader of his people and desired that someone worthy should lead after him.

His supplication *(du'ā)* was accepted by Allāh and he was told, *"O Zakariyya, We convey to you the glad tidings of a son called Yahya. We have never kept the same name for anyone before him."* Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that no other child like him was born before. Other say that the reference is to his unmatched leadership qualities and abstinence.

SAYYIDINA ZAKARIYYA'S عليه السلام SURPRISE AT THE NEWS

When Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام heard the news of a son *"He said, 'O my Lord! How will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the pinnacle of old age?"'* The question may be asked about why did he express astonishment at the news when, in his supplication *(du'ā)*, he had already accepted the fact that

his wife was barren and that he was old?

The commentators have tendered the following replies:

1. *His question regarded the manner in which this birth will take place. He was unsure whether the child would be born from the same wife, or whether he would have to marry a younger woman.*

2. *Although he knew that Allāh had the power to grant him a child without the apparent means, yet the question was spontaneous because of human nature.*

3. *He said this out of excessive joy, anticipating a repetition of the glad tiding to add to his exuberance.*

In reply to his astonishment Allāh told him, *"So it shall be."* Thereafter Allāh added, *"It will be easy for Me. Indeed I have created you before whereas you were nothing."* Allāh can repeat the process of creation whenever He pleases.

Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام then said, *"O my Lord! Appoint a sign for me (whereby I may know that my wife has conceived)." Allāh replied by saying, "Your sign shall be that you will be unable to speak to people for three nights, even though you will be healthy."* For three days and nights he would not be able to talk to anyone, as indicated by a verse of Surah Āl Imrān, where Allāh told him, *"Your sign is that you shall be unable to talk to people for three days, except by indications."* [*Surah 3, verse 41*]

Allāh also told him in Surah Āl Imrān that since he will be unable to speak he should *"Remember your Lord abundantly and hymn His purity by night and day."* Commentators say that this refers to punctuality in Salāh. Others say that it refers to making Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*at all times.

Allāh says in Surah Anbiya, *"So We responded to his plea, gifted him with Yahya and allowed his wife to bear children."* Allāh creates the means and can even create things without means.

"So he came forth unto his people from the sanctuary and gestured to them, 'Engage in glorifying your Lord morning and evening.'" The people would wait for Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام to emerge from his sanctuary to lead them in Salāh. However, when his wife conceived, he came out from the sanctuary and found that he could not speak. Therefore, he had to instruct them using signs. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 190*]

The Arabic word "mihrāb" (translated above as *"sanctuary")* refers to a place of worship. The same word is used in Surah Āl Imrān where Allāh says, *"Whenever Zakariyya went into the sanctuary in which she* [Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام] *was, he found food by her."* The same word is also used in verse 39 of Surah Āl Imrān, where Allāh says, *"So the angels called to him* [*Sayyidina Zakariyya* عليه السلام] *while he stood praying in the mihrāb."* The literal meaning of the word *"mihrāb" is "a place of battle."* A place of worship is referred to as a "mihrāb" because a worshipper is engaged in battle against Satan *(Shaytān)* when he is praying.

THE NOBLE QUALITIES OF SAYYIDINA YAHYA عليه السلام

Speaking via Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام, Allāh commanded Sayyidina

Yahya عليه السلام saying, *"O Yahya! Hold fast on to the scripture."* The scripture refers to the Torah because all the Prophets عليهم السلام of the Bani Isrā'īl after Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام followed the teachings of the Torah. Allāh says in Surah Mā'idah, *"The Prophets عليهم السلام, who were subservient to Allāh, judged the Jews with it (i.e. with the Torah)."* [*Surah 5, verse 44*]

Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام was thus instructed to practise the teachings of the Torah. Allāh then says, *"We granted him command in childhood..."* Some commentators have mentioned that *"command"* refers to the Holy Prophethood.

Other commentators have mentioned that *"command"* refers to the understanding of the Torah. Others say that it refers to acute intuition. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 72*]

"....And (We granted him) compassion from Ourselves..." In this way he was effectively able to invite the people to oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* with love. He was also able to bear any hardships that they presented to him.

Allāh also granted him *"purity."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه has interpreted this to mean obedience and sincerity. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه say that the word refers to good deeds, and Sayyidina Kalbi رحمة الله عليه says that Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام was a charity that Allāh gave to his parents.

"He was abstinent indeed." The word "taqi" means that he carried out all Allāh's commands with sincerity and abstained from all sins. Commentators say that Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام never committed a single sin, nor did he ever intend to.

Further describing him, Allāh says, *"He was kind to his parents and he was not rebellious nor disobedient."*

"Peace be on him the day he was born, the day that he passed away and the day when he will be resurrected." Sayyidina Sufyān bin Uyayana رحمة الله عليه says that the above three days are days when a person is overcome with anxiety. However, Allāh will save Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام from all grief and stress on these days. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَٰبِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا (16) فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِن
دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا (17) قَالَتْ إِنِّيٓ أَعُوذُ
بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ مِنكَ إِن كُنتَ تَقِيًّا (18) قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَٰمًا
زَكِيًّا (19) قَالَتْ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَٰمٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا (20)
قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُۥٓ ءَايَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِّنَّا
وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا (21) ۞ فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانتَبَذَتْ بِهِۦ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا (22)
فَأَجَآءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَىٰ جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَٰلَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَٰذَا وَكُنتُ نَسْيًا

مَنسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾ فَنَادَىٰهَا مِن تَحْتِهَآ أَلَّا تَحْزَنِى قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾ وَهُزِّىٓ إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ ٱلنَّخْلَةِ تُسَٰقِطْ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾ فَكُلِى وَٱشْرَبِى وَقَرِّى عَيْنًا ۖ فَإِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ ٱلْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِىٓ إِنِّى نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

(16) Remember Maryam in the Book. When she withdrew from her family to go to a place far to the east. (17) She secluded herself from the people, when We sent Our angel to her, who assumed the likeness of a perfect man before her. (18) She said, "I seek refuge with Rahmān (the Merciful) from you, if you fear Allāh." (19) He said, "I am but a messenger of your Lord to convey to you the glad tidings of a pure son." (20) She responded, "How can I have a son when no human has touched me and lam not lecherous?" (21) He said, "It shall be so. Your Lord says, "It is simple for Me. And so that We make him a sign for people and a mercy from Us. This is a decided matter." (22) So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a distant place. (23) The labour pains brought her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, "O! If only I had died before this and had been completely forgotten." (24) He called to her from below saying, "Do not grieve. Your Lord has certainly created a stream beneath you." (25) "Shake the trunk of the date palm towards you, causing fresh ripened dates to fall on you." (26) "So eat, drink and cool your eyes. Should you see any person then say, 'I have vowed to fast for Rahmān (the Merciful), so I cannot speak to anyone today.'"

SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام AND THE BIRTH OF HER SON, SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام

The incident has already been discussed in Surah Āl Imrān where the wife of Sayyidina Imrān عليه السلام vowed to dedicate her unborn child to the service of Baitul Muqaddas. Allāh then granted her a daughter instead of the son that she anticipated. She named the child Maryam (meaning "worshipper") and she was offered to the keepers of Baitul Muqaddas for upbringing.

After a type of drawing lots, the child was handed over in the care of Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام. Allāh grew her up to be pious and righteous and later gave her the tidings of the birth of a child called "Masīh," who will be high ranking in both worlds.

SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام WAS PARTICULAR ABOUT CONCEALING HERSELF AND IS STARTLED BY THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF AN ANGEL

Here, in Surah Maryam, Allāh says, *"Remember Maryam in the Book. When she withdrew from her family to go to a place far to the east."* "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" mentions that it was an extremely cold day and she went to a sunny place to comb her hair. Another report says that she went to a place to bath.

"She secluded herself from the people, when We sent Our angel [Jibrīl عليه السلام] *to her, who assumed the likeness of a perfect man before her."*

Sayyidina Maryam عليه السلام was a chaste woman and was startled by the appearance of Jibrīl عليه السلام. Therefore *"She said, 'I seek refuge with the Merciful from you, if you fear Allāh."* She told him that he appears to be a pious person who fears Allāh and therefore has no reason to be with her.

Jibrīl عليه السلام told her, *"I am but a messenger of your Lord to convey to you the glad tidings of a pure son."* This surprised her even more and *"She responded, 'How can I have a son when no human (husband) has touched me and I am not lecherous?"'* She was surprised that a child should be born of her when she had no husband, nor did she ever commit adultery.

THE ANGEL'S REPLY

In response to her astonishment Jibrīl عليه السلام said in Surah Āl Imrān, *"In this way Allāh creates what He wills. When He decrees a thing He merely says to it, 'Be!' and it is."* [*Surah 3, verse 47*]

Here in Surah Maryam he replies by saying, *'it shall be so. Your Lord says, 'It is simple for Me."'* When Allāh could create Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام without both parents and Sayyidina Hawwa عليه السلام without a mother, He can certainly create someone without a father. Allāh mentions in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Verily the likeness of Isā عليه السلام with Allāh is as the likeness of Ādam عليه السلام. He created him from clay then said to him, 'Be!' and he was."* [*Surah 3, verse 59*]

Jibrīl عليه السلام quoted Allāh as saying further that the child will be born, *"so that We make him a sign for people and a mercy from Us."* The miraculous birth of the child will show people that Allāh has the power to create without means. He will be a "mercy" for people because those who follow him will attain Allāh's pleasure and proximity.

He added, *"This is a decided matter."* None can avert this occurrence.

THE CONCEPTION OF THE CHILD, THE BIRTH, CONSOLATION NOT TO GRIEVE AND PROVISION FOR HER

"So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a distant place."

Allāh says in Surah Tahrīm, *"Maryam, the daughter of Imrān, who protected her chastity and We blew Our spirit in her collar. She attested to the messages of her Lord and His scriptures, and she was of the obedient ones."* [*Surah 66, verse 12*]

The blowing of the soul into the collar of Sayyidina Maryam عليه السلام by Jibrīl عليه السلام is attributed to Allāh because it was done by Allāh's command.. She then conceived the child and left home.

Allāh continues to relate, *"The labour pains brought her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, 'O! If only I had died before this and had been completely forgotten.'"* She expressed this desire because she was extremely perplexed. There she sat alone in the forest without even a bed on which to rest. She was even more worried about what reply she would give to the people after the birth.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام had a very brief pregnancy. This is indicated by the tone of the Qur'ān and it is farfetched to believe that she could have left home for a very long period.

Another indication to substantiate this fact is that people reprimanded her only after the birth. If she had remained with them during the pregnancy, they would have guessed before that she was expecting. Allāh knows best.

"He [Jibrīl عليه السلام] called to her from below (the hill upon which she sat) saying, 'Do not grieve. Your Lord has certainly created a stream beneath you.'" [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 82*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that the stream began to flow when Jibrīl عليه السلام struck his foot on the ground. Another narration says that there was a dry stream nearby which Allāh caused to flow and a wilted date palm which Allāh caused to bear dates. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 193*]

Jibrīl عليه السلام said to her, *"Shake the trunk of the date palm towards you, causing fresh ripened dates to fall on you."* This was also miraculous because normally even a strong man will be unable to shake a date palm, let alone a weakened woman in labour. She was able to shake the tree so that dates fell.

She was then told, *"So eat, drink and cool your eyes."* The newborn child will be the coolness of her eyes i.e. a source of comfort to her.

DATES ARE BENEFICIAL FOR LABOUR FROM A MEDICAL POINT OF VIEW

The following is an extract from "Bayānul Qur'ān":

"Your Lord has certainly created a stream beneath you. "Happiness is naturally stimulated by looking at a stream and drinking its water. According to a narration of "Ruhul Ma'āni", she was thirsty at that time. In addition to this, things that are hot in nature are medically proven to be advantageous when consumed before or after birth. They serve to make labour easy, prevent excrement and also act as a stimulant for mental well being. Water is hot in nature, as is noticed in hot springs, so it is appropriate at this juncture."

"In addition, dates are filling, nutritious, conducive for the production of blood, and strengthening for the back and joints. For these reasons it is the best food and medicine for labour. The possibility of harm coming to a person because of the heat is minimal because the heat in fresh dates is very little. In addition to this, water serves to reduce the heat further."

THE ANGEL INSTRUCTS SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام TO TELL PEOPLE THAT SHE CANNOT SPEAK TO THEM ON ACCOUNT OF HER FAST

Jibrīl عليه السلام further advised Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام by saying, *"Should you see any person then say, 'I have vowed to fast for the Merciful, so I cannot speak to anyone today."* Abstaining from speaking during fasting was permissible for the Bani Isrā'īl, but is prohibited in our Shari'ah. Of course, if a person wishes to speak less or remain silent for some personal reason, there would be no harm.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once delivering the sermon when he noticed a person standing. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم who he was and received

the reply that he was a person called Abu Isrā'īl. They told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he had vowed not to sit, not to take shade, not to talk and to remain in the state of fasting.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم to tell him to sit, take shade, to talk, but to complete the fast. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 991*]

Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه reports that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, "None can be an orphan after maturity and none may remain silent the entire day until the night." [*Abu Dawūd v. 2 p. 41*] This means that Islām does not permit a person to remain silent the entire day with the intention of fasting.

فَأَتَتْ بِهِۦ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُۥ ۖ قَالُوا۟ يَـٰمَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْـًٔا فَرِيًّا ﴿٢٧﴾ يَـٰٓأُخْتَ هَـٰرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ ٱمْرَأَ سَوْءٍ وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكِ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٨﴾ فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ ۖ قَالُوا۟ كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَن كَانَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ﴿٢٩﴾ قَالَ إِنِّى عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ ءَاتَىٰنِىَ ٱلْكِتَـٰبَ وَجَعَلَنِى نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾ وَجَعَلَنِى مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُ وَأَوْصَـٰنِى بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾ وَبَرًّۢا بِوَٰلِدَتِى وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِى جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَٱلسَّلَـٰمُ عَلَىَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدتُّ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾

(27) She brought the child before her people. They exclaimed, "O Maryam! You have surely perpetrated a grave act." (28) "O sister of Harūn! Your father was never an evil person, neither was your mother lecherous. (29) She gestured towards the child. They said, How can we speak to one who is still a baby in a cradle? (30) He said, "I am a slave of Allāh. Allāh gave me a scripture and made me the Holy Prophet..." (31) "...And Allāh has blessed me wherever I may be and has commanded me to perform Salāh and pay Zakāh as long as I am alive." (32) "Allāh has also made me kind to my mother and has not made me rebellious and wretched." (33) "Peace be on me the day I was born, the day death comes to me, and the day when I shall be resurrected."

SAYYIDAH MARYAM عليها السلام BRINGS HER CHILD HOME, THE PEOPLE OBJECT AND SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام REPLIES TO THEM

After the birth of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام, Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام *"brought the child before her people.* (Because she was unmarried) *They exclaimed, 'O Maryam! You have surely perpetrated a grave act.'"*

They continued to rebuke her saying, *"O sister of Harūn! Your father was never an evil person, neither was your mother lecherous."*

Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام did not reply to their reprimands, but *"She gestured towards the child."* The people thought that she was merely jesting, so they said *"How can we speak to one who is still a baby in a cradle?"*

Allāh granted Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام the ability to speak *and "He said, 'I am a*

slave of Allāh. Allāh gave me a scripture and made me a Holy Prophet عليه السلام." i.e. Allāh will soon confer these two blessings on me. He then continued to say, *"...And Allāh has blessed me wherever I may be..."* i.e. Blessings and good will spread wherever I go.

Furthermore he said that Allāh had *"commanded me to perform Salāh and pay Zakāh as long as I am alive. And Allāh has made me kind to my mother and has not made me rebellious and wretched."*

He concluded his address by saying, *"Peace be on me the day I was born, the day death comes to me, and the day when I shall be resurrected."*

Allāh knew that the Jews will be antagonistic towards Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and that the Christians will praise him excessively by calling him Allāh and the son of Allāh. It for this reason that Allāh made him state from the beginning that he is not Allāh, but a *"slave of Allāh."*

He also impressed upon their minds that he is as much subjected to Allāh's commandments as they are. For this reason he said that Allāh had *"commanded me to perform Salāh and pay Zakāh as long as I am alive."* It is obvious that one who worships another cannot himself be a deity.

THE STATEMENT "KIND TO MY MOTHER" DENOTES THAT SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام HAD NO FATHER

In the previous ruku Allāh mentioned with regard to Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام, *"He was kind to his parents..."* However, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام does not speak of both parents, but says, *"Allāh has made me kind to my mother..."* This makes it clear that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام did not have a father, otherwise he would have mentioned "parents" instead of *"mother."*

This evidently disproves the misconception of the Christians who claim that a certain carpenter by the name of Joseph fathered Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. They also claim that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was fathered by Allāh (Allāh forbid!). Many irreligious people in today's times also subscribe to these beliefs, whereas the Qur'ān refutes these in Surah Maryam and in Surah Āl Imrān.

ذَٰلِكَ عِيسَى ٱبۡنُ مَرۡيَمَۚ قَوۡلَ ٱلۡحَقِّ ٱلَّذِي فِيهِ يَمۡتَرُونَ (34) مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَن يَتَّخِذَ
مِن وَلَدٖۖ سُبۡحَٰنَهُۥٓۚ إِذَا قَضَىٰٓ أَمۡرٗا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ (35) وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمۡ
فَٱعۡبُدُوهُۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٞ مُّسۡتَقِيمٞ (36) فَٱخۡتَلَفَ ٱلۡأَحۡزَابُ مِنۢ بَيۡنِهِمۡۖ فَوَيۡلٞ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ
مِن مَّشۡهَدِ يَوۡمٍ عَظِيمٍ (37) أَسۡمِعۡ بِهِمۡ وَأَبۡصِرۡ يَوۡمَ يَأۡتُونَنَاۖ لَٰكِنِ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ فِي ضَلَٰلٖ
مُّبِينٖ (38) وَأَنذِرۡهُمۡ يَوۡمَ ٱلۡحَسۡرَةِ إِذۡ قُضِيَ ٱلۡأَمۡرُ وَهُمۡ فِي غَفۡلَةٖ وَهُمۡ لَا يُؤۡمِنُونَ (39) إِنَّا
نَحۡنُ نَرِثُ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ وَمَنۡ عَلَيۡهَا وَإِلَيۡنَا يُرۡجَعُونَ (40)

(34) This is Isā, the son of Maryam. We have spoken the truth regarding which

they have doubts. (35) It does not behove Allāh to take a son. He is Pure! When He decrees anything, all He has to say is "Be!" and it comes into being. (36) "And Without doubt Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight path." (37) However, the groups began disputing among themselves. Woe be to the disbelievers on the occasion of a momentous day. (38) How well will they hear and see on the day when they will come to Us! But the oppressors are in manifest error today. (39) Warn them of the day of remorse, when judgement shall be passed. Yet they are negligent and they do not believe! (40) Without a shadow of doubt We will be the inheritors of the earth and whoever is upon it and they will return only to Us.

IT IS NOT PROPER TO SAY THAT ALLĀH HAS A SON

Allāh says about the previously related account, *"This is Isā, the son of Maryam. We have spoken the truth regarding which they have doubts.* - The Jews and the Christians still doubt the matter and dispute about it.

"It does not behove Allāh to take a son. He is Pure! When He decrees anything, all He has to say is 'Be!' and it comes into being." It is therefore not farfetched to believe that Allāh could have created a person without a father. He has power to do anything. It is foolish to believe that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام can be Allāh's son when there is no similarity between the two. The Creator cannot be like the creation.

Fathers normally require assistance from their sons. However, Allāh does not require any assistance from anyone because He is Omnipotent and Independent. There is therefore no reason for Allāh to have a son.

SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام ANNOUNCES THAT HIS LORD *(RABB)* AND THE LORD *(RABB)* OF THE PEOPLE IS ALLĀH ALONE

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام also told the people, *"And Without doubt Allāh is my Lord and your, so worship Him. This is the straight path."* Despite the clarity of his address to the Jews and the Christians, *"the groups began disputing among themselves."* They disregarded the teachings of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and fabricated their own beliefs and practices. They claimed that he was Allāh, Allāh's son and one of three gods.

"Woe be to the disbelievers on the occasion of a momentous day." On the day of Judgement the plight of the disbelievers will be pitiable indeed.

"How well will they hear and see on the day when they will come to Us!" On the day of Judgement, all truths will be exposed and people will clearly differentiate between right and wrong. They will then be forced to concede the truth, but it will be too late. Allāh says, *"But the oppressors are in manifest error today."* They fail to realise the error of their ways and do not even attempt to reform themselves.

THE ANXIETY OF "THE DAY OF REMORSE"

"Warn them of the day of remorse, when judgement shall be passed. Yet they are negligent and they do not believe!" The disbelievers shall express different types of regrets on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Some will say, *"O, if only we could be*

returned, had not denied the verses of our Lord and had been from the believers!" [*Surah An'ām (6), verse 27*]

Others will cry, *"if only we could return (to the world), then we too will disassociate ourselves from them (our leaders) as they now do to us [now on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)]."* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 167*]

They will also lament saying, *"If only we were given the chance to return. Then we would have been from the believers."* [*Surah Shu'arā (26), verse 102*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضي الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that death will take the form of a sheep on the day of Judgement. A caller will then announce, "O people of Heaven *(Jannah)*" When they will hearken to the call, they will be asked, "Do you recognise this?" They will submit that they recognise it as death. This will be because they had all experienced death.

The caller will then announce, *"O people of Hell!" When they will hearken to the call, they will also be asked, "Do you recognise this?"* They will submit that they recognise it as death because they would also have experienced death. Then the sheep of death will be slaughtered before them all and the announcement will be made, *"O people of Heaven (Jannah)! You shall live forever in Heaven (Jannah) and you will never die. O people of Hell! You will live forever in Hell and you will not die."*

After saying this to the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"Warn them of the day of remorse, when judgement shall be passed. Yet they are negligent and they do not believe!"* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 291*]

Tirmidhi reports that when death will be slaughtered as described above, the people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be so exuberant that, if anyone could die of joy, they would. On the other hand, the convicts of Hell will be so grieved that, if anyone could die of grief, they certainly would.

Ibn Majah reports that death will be slaughtered at the bridge of Sirāt. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 4 p. 524*]

"Without a shadow of doubt We will be the inheritors of the earth and whoever is upon it and they will return to Us only." Every person on earth, who acts as master to his possessions, will soon die.

Eventually none shall be alive besides Allāh. Then everything (which was always His) will once again be His exclusive property.

A REFUTATION TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام PASSED AWAY

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام mentioned that Allāh *"has commanded me to perform Salāh and pay Zakāh as long as I am alive."* Some people have deduced from this verse that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام has passed away. They are foolish enough not to realise that the verse actually proves that he is still alive and will return to the world. While Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was living on earth he never had the opportunity to pay Zakāh on account of his poverty. However, when he will return to this world among the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he will then pay Zakāh.

وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقٗا نَّبِيًّا (41) إِذۡ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَٰٓأَبَتِ لِمَ تَعۡبُدُ مَا لَا
يَسۡمَعُ وَلَا يُبۡصِرُ وَلَا يُغۡنِي عَنكَ شَيۡـٔٗا (42) يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدۡ جَآءَنِي مِنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِ مَا لَمۡ
يَأۡتِكَ فَٱتَّبِعۡنِيٓ أَهۡدِكَ صِرَٰطٗا سَوِيّٗا (43) يَٰٓأَبَتِ لَا تَعۡبُدِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَۖ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنَ كَانَ
لِلرَّحۡمَٰنِ عَصِيّٗا (44) يَٰٓأَبَتِ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ أَن يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٞ مِّنَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيۡطَٰنِ
وَلِيّٗا (45) قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنتَ عَنۡ ءَالِهَتِي يَٰٓإِبۡرَٰهِيمُۖ لَئِن لَّمۡ تَنتَهِ لَأَرۡجُمَنَّكَۖ وَٱهۡجُرۡنِي
مَلِيّٗا (46) قَالَ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡكَۖ سَأَسۡتَغۡفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّيٓۖ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِي حَفِيّٗا (47) وَأَعۡتَزِلُكُمۡ
وَمَا تَدۡعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَأَدۡعُواْ رَبِّي عَسَىٰٓ أَلَّآ أَكُونَ بِدُعَآءِ رَبِّي شَقِيّٗا (48) فَلَمَّا
ٱعۡتَزَلَهُمۡ وَمَا يَعۡبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَهَبۡنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسۡحَٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلۡنَا نَبِيّٗا (49)
وَوَهَبۡنَا لَهُم مِّن رَّحۡمَتِنَا وَجَعَلۡنَا لَهُمۡ لِسَانَ صِدۡقٍ عَلِيّٗا (50)

(41) Remember Ibrahīm in the scripture. He was undoubtedly extremely true and a Holy Prophet. (42) When he told his father, "O my father! Why do you worship things that cannot hear, cannot see and cannot be of any assistance to you." (43) "O my father! Such knowledge has come to me that has not come to you, so follow me and I shall guide you to the straight path." (44) "O my father.' Do not worship Satan (Shaytān). Indeed Satan (Shaytān) was ever disobedient to Rahmān." (45) "O my father! Indeed I fear that a punishment should afflict you from the Merciful, after which you would be a friend of Satan (Shaytān). (46) His father retorted, "Are you averse to my gods, O Ibrahīm? If you do not desist, I shall stone you. Leave me forever." (47) Ibrahīm said, "Peace be on you. I shall shortly seek forgiveness from my Lord on your behalf. He has always been compassionate towards me.' (48) "I shall separate myself from you and from those whom you worship instead of Allāh. Then I shall call upon my Lord. I am hopeful that I shall not be deprived in my call unto my Lord" (49) When he departed from them and from what they worshipped instead of Allāh, We gifted him with Is'hāq and Ya'qūb. We made each one of them a Holy Prophet. (50) And We bestowed on them a portion of Our mercy and raised for them tongues of truthfulness.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام DISCUSSED ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* WITH HIS FATHER

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was from Babylon, where he invited the king Nimrūd and his idolatrous people to Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*. He also never failed to preach to his father.

Allāh says in Surah A'rāf, *"When Ibrahīm told his father Āzar, 'Do you take idols as your deity? Indeed I see you and your people in manifest error."* [*Surah An'ām (6), verse* 74]

Here, in Surah Maryam, he told his father, *"O my father! Why do you worship things (idols) that cannot hear, cannot see and cannot be of any assistance to you."* They are more helpless than the people who worship them. He then impressed upon his father's mind that age was not an issue in this matter. His father was to listen to him even though he was the son. Therefore he said, *"O my father! Such knowledge has come to me that has not come to you, so follow me and I shall guide you to the straight path."*

He went on further to say, *"O my father! Do not worship Satan (Shaytān).* Satan *(Shaytān)* instigates people to worship idols and himself as well. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام added, *"Indeed Satan (Shaytān) was ever disobedient to the Merciful."* By obeying Satan *(Shaytān)*, a person will be led on to further disobey Allāh.

"O my father! Indeed I fear that a punishment should afflict you from Rahmān (the Merciful), after which you would be a friend of Satan (Shaytān) (by being his companion in Hell as well)." He refers to Satan *(Shaytān)* as being a friend in the Hereafter as well even though every person in Hell will be enemies to each other. He has mentioned this because the cause for this punishment in Hell will be the friendship that the disbelievers fostered with Satan *(Shaytān)* in this world.

Instead of being favourably influenced by the words of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, *"His father retorted, 'Are you averse to my gods, O Ibrahīm? If you do not desist, I shall stone you. Leave me forever.'"*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام replied, *"Peace be on you."* This salutation *(Salām)* that he greeted his father with was not the type of salutation *(Salām)* that a person greets a fellow Muslim with. It is rather the salutation *(Salām)* used to escape from ignorant people. Allāh says in Surah Furqān about the good people, *'The Merciful's (Rahmān) bondsmen are those who walk on earth in humility and, when the ignorant talk to them, they say, 'Peace.''* [*Surah 25 verse 63*]

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also added, *"I shall shortly seek forgiveness from my Lord on your behalf He has always been compassionate towards me."* True to his word, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام prayed for his father, as mentioned in Surah Shu'arā, *"(O Allāh!) Forgive my father, for he is amongst those who have deviated."* [*Surah 26, verse 86*]

Allāh says in Surah Tauba , *"Ibrahīm عليه السلام sought forgiveness for his father only because of a promise that he had made to him. When it became clear to him that his father was Allāh's enemy, he exonerated himself from him. Indeed Ibrahīm عليه السلام was extremely soft-hearted and tolerant."* [*The details of this were discussed in the commentary of this verse of Surah Tauba.*]

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام continued to address his father saying, *"I shall separate myself from you and from those whom you worship instead of Allāh. Then I shall call upon my Lord. I am hopeful that I shall not be deprived in my call unto my Lord."* He was hopeful that Allāh would not reject his supplication *(du'ā)* and that Allāh would protect him from the wretchedness of the idolaters. Consequently, he migrated to Syria *(Shām)*.

Allāh says, *"When he departed from them and from what they worshipped instead of Allāh, We gifted him with (a son named) Is'hāq and (a grandson called) Ya'qūb. We*

made each one of them a Holy Prophet." Another renowned son of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, who is mentioned in Surah Baqarah and also later in this Surah.

PEOPLE OF LATER GENERATIONS WILL ALWAYS MAKE FAVOURABLE MENTION OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام AND HIS CHILDREN

"And We bestowed on them a portion of Our mercy and raised for them tongues of truthfulness." Allāh granted Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and his children the esteemed mantle of the Prophethood and many other bounties as well. Another extremely great favour was that people will always make favourable mention of them.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام made the supplication *(du'ā), "And maintain a favourable word for me amongst those who are to come."* Allāh accepted this supplication *(du'ā)* and all the later generations always spoke well of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. The Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم invoke Allāh's special mercy and blessings at the end of every Salāh when they recite the Durūd Ibrahīm in *'Tashahhud'*.

وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ مُوسَىٰٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ مُخۡلَصٗا وَكَانَ رَسُولٗا نَّبِيّٗا ﴿51﴾ وَنَٰدَيۡنَٰهُ مِن جَانِبِ ٱلطُّورِ ٱلۡأَيۡمَنِ وَقَرَّبۡنَٰهُ نَجِيّٗا ﴿52﴾ وَوَهَبۡنَا لَهُۥ مِن رَّحۡمَتِنَآ أَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ نَبِيّٗا ﴿53﴾ وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِسۡمَٰعِيلَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صَادِقَ ٱلۡوَعۡدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولٗا نَّبِيّٗا ﴿54﴾ وَكَانَ يَأۡمُرُ أَهۡلَهُۥ بِٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَٱلزَّكَوٰةِ وَكَانَ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ مَرۡضِيّٗا ﴿55﴾ وَٱذۡكُرۡ فِي ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ إِدۡرِيسَۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ صِدِّيقٗا نَّبِيّٗا ﴿56﴾ وَرَفَعۡنَٰهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا ﴿57﴾

(51) Remember Mūsa in the scripture. He was surely chosen and was a messenger (Rasūl) and a Prophet (Nabi). (52) We called him from the right side of Mount Tūr and We brought him close in communion. (53) From Our mercy We gifted him with his brother Harūn as a Prophet. (54) Remember Isma'īl in the scripture. Verily he was true to his promise and he was a "Rasul" and a Prophet (Nabi). (55) He used to enjoin Salāh and Zakāh on his family and was beloved to his Lord. (56) Remember Idrīs in the scripture. He was certainly extremely true and he was a Prophet. (57) We elevated him to a high rank.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA, HĀRŪN, ISMA'ĪL AND IDRĪS عليهم السلام

Allāh begins by saying, *"Remember Mūsa in the scripture. He was surely chosen and was a messenger (Rasul) and a Prophet (Nabi).""*

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RASŪL AND A NABI

Literally the word 'Rasul' means a 'messenger' i.e. one who conveys a message. The word 'the Holy Prophet' literally means an 'informer.' Both may be

termed as Holy Prophets. Technically speaking, a messenger *(Rasul)* is Prophet *(Nabi)* who has been given a divine scripture and a Shari'ah of his own. Such a the Holy Prophet will be termed as a messenger *(Rasul)* and a Prophet *(Nabi)* as well. Therefore, Prophet who propagates the Shari'ah of a previous the Holy Prophet may be termed only a Rasul.

Referring to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"We called him from the right side of Mount Tūr* (situated between Madyan and Egypt)..." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that the verse refers to the right side of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, not that of the mountain because a mountain does not have a right and left side. Therefore, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was summoned when the mountain was on his right.

The word "aymin" (translated above as *"right")* can also be translated as "blessed." In this case the verse will mean that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was called from the "blessed side" of the mountain, or from his blessed side.

"......and We brought him close in communion." The Arabic word "naji" (translated above as *"communion")* refers to speaking in confidence to someone. The verse thus means that Allāh spoke to him personally and directly without any mediums in between.

Allāh mentions this privilege of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام in Surah Nisā, where He says, *"Allāh specially spoke to Mūsa."* [*Surah 4, verse 164*]

"From Our mercy We gifted him with his brother Harūn as a Prophet." When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was commanded to preach to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, he submitted to Allāh thus, *"Appoint for me an assistant from my family, my brother Harūn; strengthen me with him And make him a partner to my affairs..."* [*Surah TāHā (20), verses 29-32*]

Allāh says in Surah Qasas that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"My brother Harūn is more eloquent in speech than me, so send him as an aide to me to endorse me. I fear that they will falsify me."* Allāh accepted his supplication *(du'ā)* and said, *"We shall shortly strengthen your arm with your brother."* Consequently Allāh made Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام a Prophet and addressed them both saying, *"Proceed, the two of you, to Pharaoh (Fir'aun). Indeed he is rebellious."*

THE NOBLE QUALITIES OF SAYYIDINA ISMA'ĪL عليه السلام

Thereafter Allāh says, *"Remember Isma'īl in the scripture. Verily he was true to his promise and he was a messenger (Rasūl) and a Prophet (Nabi). He used to enjoin Salāh and Zakāh on his family and was beloved to his Lord."*

Although all the Prophets عليهم السلام and even many believers *(Mu'minīn)* are true to their word, Allāh specially says about Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام *"Verily he was true to his promise...*

This is so because he truly displayed great courage in keeping to the word that he gave his father when he said, *'Oh my beloved father! Do as you have been commanded* (by slaughtering me). *If Allāh wills, you will soon find me to be amongst the patient ones.* 'Consequently, when Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام placed him down to be slaughtered, he complied and lay down calmly.

"......and he was a messenger (Rasūl) and a Prophet (Nabi). "'It is commonly believed that Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام did not have a scripture of his own, nor a Shari'ah. He propagated the teachings of his father, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Therefore, the literal meaning of the word "Rasul" (messenger) will apply to him and not the technical meaning (i.e. a Prophet who was given a Shari'ah of his own).

Hakīmul Ummah Thanwi رحمة الله عليه states that Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام is termed a "Rasul" as well because he was the one who conveyed the teachings and the Shari'ah of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to the Jurhum tribe that settled in Makkah.

The third attribute mentioned about him was that *"He used to enjoin Salāh and Zakāh on his family..."* Salāh is a physical form of worship and Zakāh is a monetary form. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام paid particular attention to these two acts of devotion when instructing his family because by being particular about these two aspects of religion *(D'īn)*the rest of religion *(D'īn)* becomes easy to practise.

The fourth quality was that he *"was beloved to his Lord."* He was one of Allāh's beloved bondsmen because of his deeds and behaviour.

Thereafter Allāh continues to mention other Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh says, *"Remember Idrīs in the scripture. He was certainly extremely true and he was a Prophet (Nabi). We elevated him to a high rank."* It is commonly believed that Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام was raised alive to the heavens and that death came to him there.

Ibn Kathīr (*v. 3 p. 126*) states that he was raised like Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and never died there. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that he was raised to the sixth heaven and passed away there.

However, none of these narrations have been reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and their chains of narrators are obscure. They have been narrated from Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه, and are therefore narratives of the Bani Isrā'īl.

A narration reported by "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 106*) from Ibnul Mundhir رحمة الله عليه has been attributed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, the words of this narration are so obscure that they can never be those of the most eloquent the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

It is possible that the narration was attributed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because of its popularity. However, it is the words of Sayyidina Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه. Even the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" did not clearly say, "the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said..."

The best meaning of the verse is that Allāh elevated his status and increased his proximity to Allāh.

THE UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SAYYIDINA IDRĪS عليه السلام

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from the "Mustadrak of Hākim" a narration of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه in which he says that Sayyidina Idrīs عليه

السلام lived a thousand years before Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. His name was Akhnūkh and he was linked to Sayyidina Shīth عليه السلام via four forefathers.

Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام was the first person to study the stars, the first to write and the first to wear sewn clothes. He used to sew clothing while the people of his time were still wearing animal skins. Allāh revealed 30 booklets to him and it was he who first introduced concepts for weighing and measuring. He was also the first person to develop weapons.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that he was also the first to fight the disbelievers. He was called Idrīs because he was actively engaged in teaching (called "dars" in Arabic) the divine scriptures. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that many Scholars *(Ulama)* are of the opinion that the name 'Idrīs' is not an Arabic word, but Hebrew. Therefore, it needn't be a derivative of "dars." However, the possibility does exist that it could have the same meaning in Hebrew as it does in Arabic.

أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ مِن ذُرِّيَّةِ ءَادَمَ وَمِمَّنۡ حَمَلۡنَا مَعَ نُوحٖ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّةِ إِبۡرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَمِمَّنۡ هَدَيۡنَا وَٱجۡتَبَيۡنَآۚ إِذَا تُتۡلَىٰ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنِ خَرُّواْۤ سُجَّدٗا وَبُكِيّٗا۩ (58) ۞فَخَلَفَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِمۡ خَلۡفٌ أَضَاعُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَٱتَّبَعُواْ ٱلشَّهَوَٰتِۖ فَسَوۡفَ يَلۡقَوۡنَ غَيًّا (59) إِلَّا مَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يَدۡخُلُونَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظۡلَمُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا (60) جَنَّٰتِ عَدۡنٍ ٱلَّتِي وَعَدَ ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ عِبَادَهُۥ بِٱلۡغَيۡبِۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ وَعۡدُهُۥ مَأۡتِيّٗا (61) لَّا يَسۡمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغۡوًا إِلَّا سَلَٰمٗاۖ وَلَهُمۡ رِزۡقُهُمۡ فِيهَا بُكۡرَةٗ وَعَشِيّٗا (62) تِلۡكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنۡ عِبَادِنَا مَن كَانَ تَقِيّٗا (63)

(58) These are the Holy Prophets (Nabi) whom Allāh has favoured from the progeny of Ādam and from the progeny of those whom We carried with Nūh (on the ark). And from the progeny of Ibrahīm and Isrā'īl and those who We guided and selected. When the verses of their Lord are recited, they fall down weeping in prostration. (59) They were succeeded by such evil successors who destroyed Salāh and pursued their passions. Soon they shall meet devastation. (60) Except for him who repents and who carries out good deeds. These people will enter Heaven (Jannah) and will not be oppressed in the least. (61) Theirs shall be eternal gardens of Heaven (Jannah) that Rahmān (the Merciful) has promised in the unseen. Undoubtedly, His promise shall come to pass. (62) There they will not hear any futility, only Salām. They shall have their sustenance there morning and evening. (63) This is the Heaven (Jannah) that Our slaves who fear shall inherit.

THE MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AMBIYA عليهم السلام

Referring to all the Prophets عليهم السلام mentioned thus far in the Surah, Allāh says, *"These are the prophet whom Allāh has favoured from the progeny of Ādam and*

from the progeny of those whom We carried with Nūh (on the ark)." All of mankind after Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were from his progeny. The only exception that is mentioned in this Surah is Sayyidina Idrīs عليه السلام because he preceded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام.

"And from the progeny of Ibrahīm and Isrā'īl..." Sayyidina Isrā'īl عليه السلام was Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام. His descendants (mentioned in this Surah) include Sayyidina Zakariyya, Sayyidina Yahya عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام. Those linked directly to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام were Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام and Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام. With regard to all of these Allāh says that He *"guided and selected"* them.

They were such people that *"When the verses of their Lord are recited they fall weeping in prostration."*

Thereafter Allāh makes mention of the other side of the coin. He says, *"They were succeeded by such evil successors who destroyed Salāh..."* This entails omitting Salāh totally, delaying its performance until after the time expires, or not performing it properly.

Allāh says in Surah Mā'ūn, *"Woe be to those who are neglectful of their Salāh."* Sayyidina Mus'ab bin Sa'd رضي الله عنه narrates that he asked his father, Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqqās رضي الله عنه about the verse *"Woe be to those who are neglectful of their Salāh."* He explained that the word *"neglectful"* does not refer to one's thoughts wandering in Salāh, but refers to destroying the Salāh by engaging in other activities during the time of Salāh. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 1 p. 387*]

PURSUING ONE'S PASSIONS PROVOKES ALL TYPES OF SINS

Regarding the evil successors, Allāh says that they *"pursued their passions."* When a person allows his carnal passions to reign, he loses the capability of restraint and resoluteness. This eventually leads to his destruction. It leads to deficiencies in all one's acts of devotion and leads one to commit sin.

Since the passions demand that one indulges in fornication, unlawful *(Harām)* acts and the pleasures of life, a person is prone to indulge in these if he does not exercise control over his passions.

"Soon they shall meet devastation." The word "ghay" (translated above as *"devastation "*) literally means deviation. It is for this reason that many Scholars *(Ulama)* have translated the verse to mean that these people will soon receive the punishment for their deviation.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" narrates from Sayyidina Abu Umāmah رضي الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Ghay is a river at the bottom of Hell that runs with the pus emanating from the people of Hell."

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reports that "Ghay" is the name of a river or valley in Hell that is extremely deep and unpleasant. Those who follow the dictates of their passions will be flung into it.

THE RIGHTEOUS ARE PROMISED ADMISSION INTO HEAVEN (JANNAH)

Allāh has promised that the evil people shall be punished *"Except for him who repents and carries out good deeds. These people will enter Heaven (Jannah) and will not be oppressed in the least."* Allāh is always prepared to forgive people who repent sincerely irrespective of their previous sins.

With regard to the bounties they will receive in the Hereafter, Allāh says, *"Theirs shall be eternal gardens of Heaven (Jannah) that Rahmān (the Merciful) has promised in the unseen."* These people believe and aspire for Heaven *(Jannah)* even though they never saw it. They were informed about it by Allāh's messengers and Books. Allāh then assures man that *"Undoubtedly, His promise shall come to pass."*

Continuing with the description of Heaven *(Jannah)*, Allāh says, *"There they will not hear any futility, only salutation (Salām)."* Allāh will also send salutations *(Salāms)* on them, as He says in Surah Yāsīn, *"They will have a greeting of Salām (peace) from the Most Merciful Lord."*

They will also greet each other with salutation *(Salām)* and the angels will convey salutations *(Salāms)* upon them. Allāh says that it will be said to them, *"Peace be on you because of the patience that you exercised. What a grand outcome you shall have in this existence."*

"They shall have their sustenance there morning and evening." Ibn Kathīr (*v. 3 p. 129*) narrates from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that there will be no day and night in Heaven *(Jannah)* as there is in this world. The only way that time will be noticed is when the curtains of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be opened and closed.

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that there will be no alternation of day and night and that the verse means that they will be served food twice a day as they are accustomed to in this world. Of course, they can eat whenever they want besides these times.

"This is the Heaven (Jannah) that Our slaves who fear shall inherit." These people adopt piety *(Taqwa)* i.e. they carry out Allāh's commands and abstain from all sins. The greatest piety *(Taqwa)* is to abstain from disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk)*. No polytheist or disbeliever will be able to enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. The people of Heaven *(Jannah)* will be ranked according to the level of piety *(Taqwa)* that they possess.

وَمَا نَتَنَزَّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ لَهُۥ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾ رَّبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَٱعْبُدْهُ وَٱصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَٰدَتِهِۦ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُۥ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

(64) "We descend only upon the command of your Lord. To Him belongs whatever is before us, whatever is behind us and whatever is between the two.

Your Lord never forgets." (65) The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two, so worship Him and be steadfast in His worship. Do you know of any that share His name?

SAYYIDINA JIBR'ĪL عليه السلام REPLIES TO THE REQUEST OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 691*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Jibrīl عليه السلام, "What prevents you from visiting me more often than you do?" In reply to this request, the above verse was revealed viz. *"We (angels) descend only upon the command of your Lord (Rabb)..."*

"Ruhul Ma'ani" (*v. 16 p. 113*) reports that when revelation stopped coming to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for a few days after he promised the Polytheists that he would reply to their three questions (regarding the soul, the people of the cave and Dhul Qarnain), Jibrīl عليه السلام came with the required revelation. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him that he had been eagerly awaiting him.

Jibrīl عليه السلام told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he was also eager to meet him, but he is merely Allāh's slave. He said that he descends to the earth only when Allāh commands him and does not come when 'Allāh does not command him. It was then that the above verse was revealed with Surah Duhā (*Surah 93*).

Jibrīl عليه السلام said, *"We descend only upon the command of your Lord. To Him belongs whatever is before us, whatever is behind us and whatever is between the two."* Some commentators say that *"whatever is before us"* refers to the future, *"whatever is behind us"* refers to the past, and *"whatever is between the two"* refers to the present. Therefore, the angels may descend only when Allāh permits them to.

Sayyidina Abul Ālia رحمة الله عليه says that *"whatever is before us"* refers to the entire universe before the blowing of the trumpet, *"whatever is behind us"* refers to the Hereafter, and *"whatever is between the two"* refers to the time between the first blowing of the trumpet and the second 'blowing. This intermediate period will last for 40 years.

According to other commentators *"whatever is before us"* refers to the earth and *"whatever is behind us"* refers to the skies. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that some commentators have mentioned that the verses refer to place and time. Therefore, the verse will mean that Allāh is in control of all places and all times. None may move from one place to another without His permission. Similarly, none can do anything at any time unless Allāh ordains it. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 114*]

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه states on pg. 202 of "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that this verse means that Allāh's knowledge encompasses everything before and behind.

"Your Lord never forgets." Allāh has knowledge of everything. He did not forget to send revelation to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, but delayed it for reasons best known to Him.

"The Lord of the heavens, the earth and whatever is between the two, so worship

Him and be steadfast in His worship." Only He deserves to be worshipped. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is encouraged in this verse to remain steadfast in Allāh's worship and not to be affected by the cessation of revelation, nor by the taunts of the polytheists when revelation was paused.

"Do you know of any that share His name?" No Muslim can ever call another being 'Allāh.' Even the polytheists do not have the courage to call any of their idols 'Allāh.' Another translation of the Arabic word "samīyā" (translated above as someone who shares His name) is a partner. The verse will therefore mean that Allāh can have no partners.

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنسَانُ أَإِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا (66) أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ
مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا (67) فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ
جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا (68) ثُمَّ لَنَنزِعَنَّ مِن كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ عَلَى الرَّحْمَٰنِ عِتِيًّا (69) ثُمَّ
لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا صِلِيًّا (70)

(66) Man says, "Shall I be resurrected alive after I have died?" (67) Does man not recall that We created him before when he was nothing? (68) By your Lord! We will certainly gather them and the Satans (Shayātīn). Then We shall present them before Hell on their knees. (69) Then We will definitely separate from every group those who were most rebellious against the Merciful. (70) Then only We will know best who are most deserving of admission into Hell.

MAN DENIES RESURRECTION AND WILL BE GATHERED WITH THE SATANS *(SHAYĀTĪN)* ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

After making mention of His Oneness and power, Allāh reminds man of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh begins by saying, *"Man says, 'Shall I be resurrected alive after I have died?'"* He says this out of astonishment and because he rejects the belief. This subject is tackled in many verses of the Qur'ān.

Allāh replies to man by saying, *"Does man not recall that We created him before when he was nothing?"* When Allāh could create billions of people from a mere drop of fluid, why can He not raise the dead?

Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"Has man not seen that We created him from a seed, after which he is suddenly an open adversary? He coins similitude's for Us and forgets how he was created. He says, 'Who will give life to bones after they have decomposed?' Say, 'The One Who gave life to it the first time will revive it. He has knowledge of all things."* [*Surah 36, verses 77-79*]

Allāh then continues to depict the scene of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"By your Lord! We will certainly gather them and the Shayātīn."* The Shayātīn engage themselves in misleading mankind. Therefore, on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, they will also be raised for questioning with the ones whom they misled. Commentators mention that the Satans *(Shayātīn)* will be chained with

those whom they misled in the world. They are together in this world and will be together in the Hereafter.

"Then we shall present them before Hell on their knees." This will serve to intensify their humiliation before actually entering Hell. All the disbelievers, irrespective of their positions in the world will be there together. However, sifting will then take place. Allāh says, *"Then We will definitely separate from every group those who were most rebellious against the Merciful."*

In this manner, the disbelievers will be classified according to the level of their disobedience to Allāh. They will be cast into Hell accordingly i.e. the worst of them will be placed in that part of Hell that is the worst.

Allāh says in Surah Nahl, *"For those who disbelieve and forbid (others) from Allāh 's path, We shall add punishment to their punishment because of the corruption that they caused."* [*Surah 16, verse 88*]

"Then only We will know best who are most deserving of admission into Hell." Only Allāh knows who belongs to which level of Hell.

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا وَّنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا ﴿٧٢﴾

(71) Every one of you shall pass by it (Hell). This is a decreed command of your Lord. (72) Then we shall rescue those who fear and we will leave the oppressors there on their knees.

ALL OF MANKIND WILL PASS HELL *(JAHANNAM)* AND ALLĀH WILL RESCUE THE PEOPLE OF PIETY *(TAQWA)* FROM IT

The above verses imply that every person, be he good or evil, will pass over Hell when people cross the bridge of Sirāt. Allāh will cause the believers *(Mu'minīn)* to cross over safely, each according to the level of their piety. However, the sinners will not be able to cross so easily. Massive hooks will grab at them from beneath and cast many of them into Hell. There will be many sinful believers *(Mu'minīn)* whom Allāh will allow to cross the bridge, albeit with difficulty.

Those Believers *(Mu'minīn)* who will fall into Hell may be later reprieved because of the intercession of the Prophets *(Anbiya)* عليهم السلام, the angels and the pious Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Eventually the last of them will also be freed from Hell by the grace of Allāh Himself. Only the polytheists and hypocrites shall remain in Hell forever. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb p. 407-4 13*]

Other commentators have translated the verse to mean that every person will actually enter Hell. However, the fire will be cool for the believers *(Believer (Mu'min)īn)* like how Allāh cooled the fire for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in this world. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās and Jābir bin Abdullah رضي الله عنه both narrate this interpretation from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم [*Ibn Kathīr p. 131-133*]

The crossing of the Sirāt cannot be rejected because it has been mentioned in

numerous authentic Ahdīth. It is possible that those believers *(Mu'minīn)* who are allowed to cross over the Sirāt will be later put into Hell, but the fire will be cooled for them. Allāh knows best.

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ قَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ أَىُّ ٱلْفَرِيقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا
وَأَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا ﴿٧٣﴾ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَثَٰثًا وَرِءْيًا ﴿٧٤﴾ قُلْ مَن كَانَ فِى
ٱلضَّلَٰلَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ مَدًّا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا رَأَوْا۟ مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا ٱلْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا ٱلسَّاعَةَ
فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ جُندًا ﴿٧٥﴾ وَيَزِيدُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱهْتَدَوْا۟
هُدًى ۗ وَٱلْبَٰقِيَٰتُ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ مَّرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

(73) When Our clear verses are recited to them, the disbelievers ask the believers, "Which of the two groups has a better position and which of them has a finer gathering?" (74) How many generations did We destroy before them, who were better off than them in terms of resources and appearance? (75) Say, "Allāh shall grant respite to those who are astray until they witness what has been promised to them, Thereafter there shall be either punishment or Judgment (Qiyāmah). Then they will know who is in the worst position and who has the weakest army." (76) Allāh will increase the guidance of those who are rightly guided. The lasting good deeds are best in the sight of your Lord in terms of reward and best in terms of consequences.

THE REPLY TO THE QUESTION OF THE DISBELIEVERS REGARDING WHICH OF THE TWO GROUPS ENJOY THE BEST POSITION AND BEST ASSEMBLY

Allāh says, *"When Our clear verses are recited to them [by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم], the disbelievers ask the believers, 'Which of the two groups (ourselves and yourselves) has a better position and which of them has a finer gathering?"* By saying this, the disbelievers insinuated that they were more affluent and their gatherings were more embellished and refined, whereas the Muslims were poor and simple people.

In this way they told the Muslims that if they (the disbelievers) were wrong in their ways, Allāh would not have favoured them in terms of the world. Rather, they said, it seems that Allāh is displeased with the Muslims since He is not conferring on them the comforts of this world. They therefore believed that they were more beloved to Allāh than the Muslims.

Refuting this claim of theirs, Allāh says, *"How many generations did We destroy before them, who were better off than them in terms of resources and appearance?"* Allāh tells them that the affluence of this world is no indication of acceptance by Allāh. If it were, then Allāh would never have destroyed the many nations before them who were even more affluent and wealthier than them.

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Those before them denied. These people cannot even reach a tenth of what We gave them (those before them), yet they falsify My messengers.*

How will My retribution be?" [*Surah 34, verse 45*]

THE DISBELIEVERS ARE GRANTED RESPITE AND ARE THEN MADE TO SEE THEIR OUTCOME

"Say, 'Allāh shall grant respite to those who are astray until they witness what has been promised to them. Thereafter there shall be either punishment or Judgment day (Qiyāmah)." Allāh informs people in this verse that the affluence and apparent well-being of the disbelievers are a result of Allāh's leniency towards them and not because He likes them.

Allāh allows them respite and increases their wealth so that they gradually increase in rebelliousness and sin. Thereafter, Allāh seizes them with punishment or with the pangs of death. When this occurs, *"Then they will know who is in the worst position and who has the weakest army."* The reply to their earlier question to the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* will present itself before them. At that time neither their affluence nor their numbers and gatherings will be of any avail to them.

Allāh mentions one of the many bounties that He bestows on the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says, *"Allāh will increase the guidance of those who are rightly guided."* An increase in guidance increases one's belief *(Imān)*.

This increase in belief *(Imān)* will, in turn, encourage an increase in good deeds. Therefore, Allāh adds, *"The lasting good deeds are best in the sight of your Lord in terms of reward and best in terms of consequences."* These deeds will earn a person the eternal bliss of Heaven *(Jannah)*, which is the best outcome and consequence one can expect.

(77) Have you seen him who rejects Our verses and says, "I shall certainly be granted wealth and children"? (78) Has he peeked into the unseen or has he made a pact with the Merciful? (79) Never! We shall shortly record what he says and continue to intensify the punishment for him. (80) And We shall be the Owners of what he says and he will come to Us all alone.

REFUTING THOSE DISBELIEVERS WHO CLAIM THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE WEALTH AND CHILDREN ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AS WELL

Sayyidina Khabbāb bin Aratt رضي الله عنه reports that he was a goldsmith and the polytheist Ās bin Wā'il owed him some money. He says that when he asked for the money, Ās said that he would never pay it back until Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه rejected the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه told him, "I shall never reject the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم until you die and are resurrected."

Ās queried, *"Will I be resurrected?" When Sayyidina Khabbāb* رضي الله عنه *replied in the affirmative, Ās said,"* Then I shall repay your debt there because I will be granted wealth and children there as well." On this occasion the above verse was revealed viz. *"Have you seen him who rejects Our verses and says, 'I shall certainly be granted wealth and children"?* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 691/2*]

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports that Ās bin Wā'il owed money to a few Sahabah رضي الله عنهم. When they approached him to collect their dues, he asked them whether they believed that there shall be gold, silver, silk and all types of fruit in Heaven *(Jannah)*. When they attested to this belief, he said that he would repay them there because he was because of receive wealth and children in the Hereafter. He even claimed that he would receive the Qur'ān there. The verse was revealed with regard to this.

He said such things mockingly and wished to insult the poor Sahabah رضي الله عنهم. He believed that he was the beloved of Allāh merely because Allāh had granted him wealth. Allāh replies to him, and to all others who may subscribe to the same belief. Allāh says, *"Has he peeked into the unseen..."* i.e. Has he seen these happenings of the future? Indeed, whatever he says is baseless and untrue.

".....or has he made a pact with the Merciful?" i.e. a pact to the effect that Allāh shall confer these things on him in the Hereafter? Allāh replies, "Never!" None of these things can be true. Only the believers *(Mu'minīn)* will profit in the Hereafter, while the disbelievers shall be in total loss.

Allāh continues, *"We shall shortly record what he says and continue to intensify the punishment for him."* He will be punished for his disbeliefs and will have added punishment because he was audacious enough to claim that he shall have wealth and children in the Hereafter and because he ridiculed Islām.

"And We shall be the Owners of what he says..." i.e. Allāh owns all the wealth and children that he speaks of. Eventually, when he dies, even his supposed ownership will be lost to him.

"..... and he will come to Us all alone." On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, his wealth and children will not accompany him. When all that he once possessed will not be with him, how can he expect more to be given to him there?

وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ءَالِهَةً لِّيَكُونُوا۟ لَهُمْ عِزًّا ﴿٨١﴾ كَلَّا ۚ سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ
وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا ﴿٨٢﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينَ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا ﴿٨٣﴾
فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٨٤﴾

(81) Leaving Allāh, they adopt many gods so that these may be a token of honour for them. (82) This will never be.' They (their gods) will soon reject their worship and become adversaries to them. (83) Have you not seen that We have set the Satans (Shayātīn) upon the disbelievers, who instigate them tremendously? (84) So do not be hasty with regard to them. We are meticulously keeping records of them.

FALSE GODS WILL DENY THE WORSHIP OF THEIR WORSHIPPERS AND BECOME THEIR FOES

The polytheists boasted about their idols and considered them to be a source of pride and honour. During the battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan called out to the Muslims, "We have Uzza (the name of one of their idols), while you do not!" In reply to this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Allāh is our ally, while you have none!"*

Allāh says, *"Leaving Allāh, they adopt many gods so that these may be a token of honour for them. This will never be! They (the false gods) will soon reject their worship (the worship of the Polytheists) and become adversaries to them."* The polytheists will therefore never get the intercession that they expected from these false gods.

Allāh says in Surah Ahqāf , *"When people are resurrected they (their false gods) will be enemies to them and will deny their worship'* In addition to this, the false gods will even put the blame on these people and entreat Allāh to punish them.

Allāh then says, *"Have you not seen that We have set the Satans (Shayātīn) upon the disbelievers, who instigate them tremendously?"* Because of the incitement of the Satans *(Shayātīn)*, these people continue to reject the truth and remain steadfast on disbeliefs. By behaving in this manner they are inviting Allāh's wrath upon themselves. Allāh reassures the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that His punishment will soon overtake them at its appointed time, *"So do not be hasty with regard to them. We are meticulously keeping records of them."*

Certain commentators have translated the last part of the above verse as, *"We are meticulously counting their breaths/days."* Therefore, their days are numbered and they shall soon meet with the consequences of their deeds. Even lengthy lives in this world are insignificant when compared to the Hereafter.

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَفْدًا (85) وَنَسُوقُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا (86) لَّا يَمْلِكُونَ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ ٱتَّخَذَ عِندَ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ عَهْدًا (87)

(85) The day when We shall gather the pious unto the Merciful as guests. (86) And We will drag the criminals to Hell, thirsty. (87) Only those who receive permission from Allāh will have the ability to intercede.

THE PIOUS WILL BE LED AS ALLĀH'S GUESTS, WHILE THE SINNERS WILL BE LEFT THIRSTY AND DRAGGED TO HELL *(JAHANNAM)*

These verses depict the scene of the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. Allāh says, *"The day when We shall gather the pious unto the Merciful as guests."* They will be treated with reverence and granted whatever they desire.

On the other hand, *"We will drag the criminals to Hell, thirsty."* They will be dragged like animals and will not be allowed to slake their intense thirst.

"Only those who receive permission from Allāh will have the ability to intercede."

Allāh makes a similar statement in the Āyatul Kursi, where He says, *"Who is there to intercede before Him without His permission?"* [*Surah Baqarah (2), verse 255*]

(88) They say, Rahmān "the Merciful has taken a child." (89) You have certainly said a grave thing. (90) The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to pieces. (91) All this because they ascribed children to Rahmān (the Merciful). (92) It is not befitting of the Merciful to take children. (93) Everything within the heavens and the earth shall come to Rahmān as slaves. (94) Allāh has counted them all and numbered them all precisely. (95) Each one of them will come to Him all alone on the day of Judgment (Qiyāmah).

THE GRAVITY OF CLAIMING THAT ALLĀH HAS CHILDREN

The polytheists of Makkah claimed that the angels were Allāh's daughters. The Jews claimed that Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام was Allāh's son and the Christians said that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was His son.

Expressing the gravity of this belief Allāh says, *"They say, 'Rahmān (the Merciful) has taken a child.' You have certainly said a grave thing. The heavens may split asunder because of it, the earth may be cleaved open and the mountains may crash to pieces. All this because they ascribed children to Allāh."*

Such a belief constitutes an insult to the grandeur of Allāh. Allāh says, *"It is not befitting of the Merciful to take children."* Allāh has no need for any partners and assistants. It is absurd to claim that these people are Allāh's children because there can be no similarity between them and Allāh.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh says, *"The son of Ādam has falsified Me whereas he should not do so. He swears Me whereas he should not. His falsification is that he says that I cannot resurrect him, whereas it is the same to Me to create him the second time as I did the first time. His swearing is that he says that I have children, whereas I am Pure from having a wife and children. I am the One, The Independent. I beget not nor was I begotten. There is none equal to Me."* [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"None is more tolerant than Allāh with unacceptable talks. People attribute children to Him, yet He forgives them and continues to feed them."* [*Mishkāt p. 13*]

"Everything within the heavens and the earth shall come to the Merciful as slaves." All of creation are Allāh's slaves and they will appear as such on the Day of *Judgment (Qiyāmah)*. How can Allāh's slaves be regarded as His children?

"Allāh has counted them all and numbered them all precisely." Allāh has perfect knowledge of every one of His creation and none of them will be able to escape Him on the Day of Judgement.

"Each one of them will come to Him all alone on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)." There will be none to assist them and Allāh will grant each one of them their just dues and punishment.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنُ وُدًّا ﴿٩٦﴾ فَإِنَّمَا
يَسَّرْنَـٰهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ وَتُنذِرَ بِهِۦ قَوْمًا لُّدًّا ﴿٩٧﴾ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا
قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْنٍ هَلْ تُحِسُّ مِنْهُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًۢا ﴿٩٨﴾

(96) As for those who believe and do good deeds, Rahmān will soon authorise love for them. (97) We have made the Qur'ān easy on your tongue so that you may convey glad tidings to the pious with it and warn the quarrelsome people with it. (98) How many were the generations that We destroyed! Do you see any of them or do you hear any whisper from them?

THE REVERENCE TO BE ACCORDED TO THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)*, THE SIMPLICITY OF THE QUR'ĀN AND THE DESTRUCTION OF PREVIOUS NATIONS

Expressing the virtue of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says, *"As for those who believe and do good deeds, the Merciful will soon autho rise love for them."* Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that when Allāh loves a person, He calls Jibrīl عليه السلام and tells him, "I love such a person, so you also love him." Jibrīl عليه السلام then begins to love the person and announces in the heavens, "Behold! Allāh loves a certain person, so you should all love him also." Consequently, the inhabitants of the heavens all begin to love the person. Thereafter the person is accepted on earth and all on earth begin to love him (i.e. the good people on earth. It is of no consequence if the Disbelievers and sinners dislike him).

In a similar manner, when Allāh dislikes a person, He calls Jibrīl عليه السلام and tells him, *"I detest such a person, so you also detest him."* Jibrīl عليه السلام then begins to detest the person and announces in the heavens, *"Behold! Allāh detests a certain person, so you should all detest him also."* Consequently, the inhabitants of the heavens all begin to detest the person. Thereafter the person is rejected on earth and all on earth begin to abhor him. [*Muslim v. 2 p. 331*]

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that the essence of the above verse is that Allāh places love for the pious in the hearts of people. He adds that in addition to this, Allāh also provides for them, guides them to perform good deeds, to possess excellent conduct and Allāh

prompts people always to speak favourably of them.

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه related that a person once resolved to worship Allāh with such vehemence that it should cause a stir among the people. Consequently, he constantly stood in Salāh, was always the first in the mosque *(Masjid)* and always last to leave. After seven months of exertion, he noticed that whenever he passed people they muttered, "Look! There goes the show-off."

He then addressed himself saying, *"See how your fame has turned to disrepute. I should change my intention and act only to attain Allāh's pleasure."* When he changed his intention and continued with his actions, people would comment as he passed, *"May Allāh bless him."* After recounting this incident, Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه recited the verse, *"As for those who believe and do good deeds, Rahmān the Merciful will soon authorise love for them."*

Sayyidina Uthmān bin Affān رضي الله عنه has mentioned that Allāh will adorn a person with the shawl of his deeds, be the deeds good or evil. [*Ibn kathīr v. 3 p. 140*].

This means that good people will be recognised as being good and evil people will be recognised as they are. Those who were righteous are favourably remembered until today, though they may have passed away centuries ago. However, those evil souls who were evil are not remembered with good words, even though they may have been wealthy monarchs.

"We have made the Qur'ān easy on your tongue so that you may convey glad tidings to the pious with it and warn the quarrelsome people with it." The Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic, which was the mother tongue of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh made it easy for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم even though he was not taught by anyone. Allāh has also made the recitation and understanding of the Qur'ān easy for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم although they may not be Arabs.

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that the *"quarrelsome people"* refers to the Quraysh. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه interprets *"quarrelsome people"* to mean people who cannot be reformed. Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that these are such people whose ears of the heart are deaf. [*Ibn kathīr v. 3 p. 140*]

"How many were the generations that We destroyed! Do you see any of them or do you hear any whisper from them?" Allāh has destroyed many nations in the past because of their disbeliefs. They were people who made lavish claims and had much to say. However, today even their whispers cannot be heard. People should derive a lesson from these extinct nations.

سورة طٰهٰ

Makkan	Surah Tā Hā	Verses 135

طه ﴿1﴾ مَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِتَشْقَىٰٓ ﴿2﴾ إِلَّا تَذْكِرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَىٰ ﴿3﴾ تَنزِيلًا مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ ٱلْعُلَى ﴿4﴾ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱسْتَوَىٰ ﴿5﴾ لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ ٱلثَّرَىٰ ﴿6﴾ وَإِن تَجْهَرْ بِٱلْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَعْلَمُ ٱلسِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى ﴿7﴾ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ ٱلْأَسْمَآءُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ﴿8﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Tā Hā. (2) We have not revealed the Qur'ān to you to cause you difficulty. (3) However it is advice for him who fears. (4) Revealed from Him Who created the earth and the lofty skies. (5) The Merciful has focused on the throne. (6) To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens, whatever is in the earth, whatever is between the two, and whatever is beneath the clay. (7) Even if you speak loudly, He knows what is whispered and all that is even more hidden. (8) Allāh is such that there is no deity besides Him. His are the most beautiful names.

THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED BY THE CREATOR OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH AS ADVICE TO THE FEARFUL

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 211*) reports from the commentator Kalbi رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to exert himself greatly when the revelation of the Qur'ān began. He would exhaust himself so much that he was forced to lean sometimes on the right leg, and sometimes on the left leg when performing Salāh. He used to spend the entire night in Salāh. It was for this reason that Allāh revealed the verse, *"We have not revealed the Qur'ān to you to cause you difficulty."*

According to another narration, the verse was revealed when the polytheists, after witnessing this exertion, told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم*! It seems like this Qur'ān was revealed to cause you difficulty."*

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم need not grieve over those who reject the Qur'ān. According to this interpretation, the verse will resemble the 6th verse of Surah Kahf, where Allāh says, *'it should not be that you destroy yourself after them in grief because they do not believe in this subject (the Qur'ān)."* [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 16 p. 149*]

"However it is advice for him who fears (Allāh)." Although the Qur'ān was revealed for all of mankind, it makes no difference whether they listen to the Qur'ān or not. They will never believe. Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"You can warn only him who follows the advice and fears the Merciful without seeing Him."* [*Surah 36, verse 11*]

Allāh says further that the Qur'ān is *"Revealed from Him Who created the earth and the lofty skies."*

"the Merciful has focused on the throne." A detailed discussion on Allāh's rising to the throne was discussed in the commentary of verse 54 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says, *"Undoubtedly your Lord is Allāh, Who has created the heavens and the earth in six days and then rose to the Throne."*

ALLĀH HAS KNOWLEDGE OF EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS, IN THE EARTH, IN BETWEEN THE TWO AND OF WHAT IS BENEATH THE CLAY

"To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens, whatever is in the earth, whatever is between the two, and whatever is beneath the clay." *"Ruhul Ma'āni"* quotes Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه as saying that *"whatever is beneath the clay"* refers to whatever is beneath the seventh earth. (The Ahadīth and verses of the Qur'ān attest to the presence of seven earths).

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who usurps even a hand's span worth of land shall have the seven earths as a yoke around his neck on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. [*Bukhari*]

Another narration of Bukhari states that the person who usurps the land of another will be sunk below the seven earths.

According to a narration of Ahmad, if a person usurps the amount of hand's span, he will be made to dig until he reaches the end of the seventh earth. Then this shall be placed as a yoke around his neck until all the people have been judged on the day of Judgment. [*Mishkāt p. 286*]

ALLĀH IS AWARE OF WHAT IS SPOKEN AUDIBLY AND SILENTLY

"Even if you speak loudly, He knows what is whispered and all that is even more hidden." Allāh is even aware of the unspoken thoughts that the hearts conceal. This meaning is revealed by the fact that Allāh uses the word *"knows"* instead of "hears."

"Allāh is such that there is no deity besides Him. His are the most beautiful names." These various names denote His excellent attributes and perfection. The

discussion of Allāh's names was discussed in verse 179 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*) and at the end of Surah Bani Isrā'īl (*Surah 17*).

وَهَلْ أَتَىٰكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَىٰٓ ﴿9﴾ إِذْ رَءَا نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ ٱمْكُثُوٓا۟ إِنِّىٓ ءَانَسْتُ نَارًا
لَّعَلِّىٓ ءَاتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوْ أَجِدُ عَلَى ٱلنَّارِ هُدًى ﴿10﴾ فَلَمَّآ أَتَىٰهَا نُودِىَ يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ
﴿11﴾ إِنِّىٓ أَنَا۠ رَبُّكَ فَٱخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ بِٱلْوَادِ ٱلْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿12﴾ وَأَنَا ٱخْتَرْتُكَ
فَٱسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوحَىٰٓ ﴿13﴾ إِنَّنِىٓ أَنَا ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدْنِى وَأَقِمِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ
لِذِكْرِىٓ ﴿14﴾ إِنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أُخْفِيهَا لِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا تَسْعَىٰ ﴿15﴾
فَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكَ عَنْهَا مَن لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِهَا وَٱتَّبَعَ هَوَىٰهُ فَتَرْدَىٰ ﴿16﴾ وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِينِكَ
يَـٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿17﴾ قَالَ هِىَ عَصَاىَ أَتَوَكَّؤُا۟ عَلَيْهَا وَأَهُشُّ بِهَا عَلَىٰ غَنَمِى وَلِىَ فِيهَا
مَـَٔارِبُ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿18﴾ قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يَـٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿19﴾ فَأَلْقَىٰهَا فَإِذَا هِىَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعَىٰ ﴿20﴾ قَالَ
خُذْهَا وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ سَنُعِيدُهَا سِيرَتَهَا ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿21﴾ وَٱضْمُمْ يَدَكَ إِلَىٰ جَنَاحِكَ تَخْرُجْ
بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوٓءٍ ءَايَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿22﴾ لِنُرِيَكَ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِنَا ٱلْكُبْرَى ﴿23﴾ ٱذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ
إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿24﴾

(9) Has not the story of Mūsa come to you? (10) When he saw a fire and said to his wife, "Wait! I perceive a fire. Perchance I may bring to you a brand from there, or I may find some guide at the fire. (11) When he came to the fire, it was announced, "O Mūsa!" (12) "I am indeed your Lord, so remove your shoes for you are upon the pure plain of Tuwa." (13) "I have selected you, so hearken to what is being revealed." (14) "Verily I am Allāh. There is no deity besides Me, so worship Me and establish Salāh for My remembrance." (15) "Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* is undoubtedly near. I shall conceal it so that every soul can be granted retribution for its efforts." (16) "Therefore the person who does not believe in it, and who follows his carnal passions should never forbid you from it, causing you to be destroyed." (17) "What is that in your right hand, O Mūsa?" (18) He replied, "It is my staff on which I lean, beat down leaves for my goats to graze on and I have many other uses for it." (19) Allāh said, "Throw it down, O Mūsa." (20) So he threw it down, and suddenly it was a slithering snake. (21) Allāh said, "Grab hold of it and do not be afraid. We shall soon return it to its former state." (22) "And thrust your hand into your side, it shall emerge shining, without any defects. This is the second sign." (23) "So that We may show you some of Our magnificent signs." (24) "Go to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. He is indeed rebellious."

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام SEES A FIRE WHILE RETURNING FROM MADYAN, BECOMES A PROPHET *(NABI)* AND IS COMMANDED TO PREACH TO PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*

As was mentioned previously, the twelve sons of Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام, including those of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام, settled in Egypt. Their progeny grew from then, but the Coptic Egyptians always persecuted them. Eventually Allāh raised Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام among them. He grew up in the house of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and, after inadvertently killing a Copt, fled to Madyan. There he married and lived for ten years.

The above verses of Surah Tā Hā describe the time when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was returning with his wife to Egypt. This episode is also narrated in Surah Naml and Surah Qasas . It was during winter that they travelled and it so happened that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام lost the road. Thereafter he noticed a fire burning from the direction of Mount Tūr.

Recounting this epic, Allāh says, *"Has not the story of Mūsa come to you? When he saw a fire and said to his wife, 'Wait! I perceive a fire. Perchance I may bring to you a brand from there (to warm yourself), or I may find some guide at the fire."* This verse shows that a person should provide for the needs of his family together with his own needs.

Because Allāh intended to appoint him as a Prophet, *"When he came to the fire, it was announced (by Allāh), 'O Mūsa! I am indeed your Lord, so remove your shoes for you are upon the pure plain of Tuwa."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه says that his shoes were impure because they were made from the untreated skin of donkey. Sayyidina Mujāhid and Ikramah رحمة الله عليهما are of the opinion that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was commanded to remove his shoes so that the pure and holy sand of Tuwa may touch his feet. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 213*]

Allāh continued to address him saying, *"I have selected you, so hearken to what is being revealed. Verily I am Allāh. There is no deity besides Me, so worship Me and establish Salāh for My remembrance."* Although Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was a believer *(Mu'min)* from before, Allāh intended to fortify his belief.

Allāh also told him, *"Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is undoubtedly near. I shall conceal it so that every soul can be granted retribution for its efforts. Therefore the person who does not believe in it and who follows his carnal passions should never forbid you from it, causing you to be destroyed."* Allāh merely intended to warn him, even though it was impossible that any deviant person could influence any Prophet.

Since Allāh wanted Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to preach to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, He granted him two miracles with which he could prove his apostleship to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his people. Describing these, Allāh says that He asked, *"What is that in your right hand, O Mūsa?"*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام replied, *"It is my staff.."* Instead of sufficing with this reply, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام seized the golden opportunity of speaking to Allāh, and added, ... *on which I lean, beat down leaves for my goats to graze on and I have many other uses for it."*

"Allāh said, 'Throw it down, O Mūsâ.' So he threw it down, and suddenly it was a slithering snake." Seeing this, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام withdrew, but Allāh told him, *"Grab hold of it and do not be afraid. We shall soon return it to its former state."*

Thereupon Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام held the snake and Allāh transformed it back into a staff. This was the first miracle (sign) for Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Thereafter, Allāh describes the second, when He says, *"And thrust your hand into your side, it shall emerge shining, without any defects (i.e. without you suffering from white liver, etc). This is the second sign."*

Allāh then told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that He had granted him these two miracles *"So that We may show you some of Our magnificent signs."* Thereafter, Allāh commanded him saying, *"Go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun). He is indeed rebellious."*

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام MISTAKES THE CELESTIAL LIGHT OF ALLĀH FOR FIRE

Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه states in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 213*) that commentators say that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام mistook the "Nūr" (celestial light) of Allāh for fire. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Ikramah رحمة الله عليه and others all hold the view that the light that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saw was Allāh's "Nūr" (celestial light).

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh's veil is Nūr and that His brilliance would singe whatever the eye can see if it is exposed to the world. [*Muslim*]

Some commentators have mentioned that the Nūr that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saw was the Nūr of Allāh's veil. "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 126*) reports from the "Musnad of Ahmad" that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saw an extremely strange sight at Tuwa. He saw what appeared to be a fire engulfing a tree. However, the tree was totally unaffected and not a single branch or leaf was burned. In fact, the beauty and bloom of the tree was enhanced by the 'fire'.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام then waited for a flame so that he could take it with him. However, this did not happen. He then placed some grass near it expecting it to light, but to no avail. According to some narrations, the 'fire' leapt forward, causing him to recede. It was then that Allāh addressed him.

SALĀH IS FOR ALLĀH'S REMEMBRANCE

Allāh instructed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام with the words, *"establish Salāh for My remembrance."* This emphasises the importance of Salāh and also tells us that the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were also enjoined with the performance of Salāh.

In verse 37 of Surah Ibrahīm (*Surah 14*), Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام supplicated to Allāh saying, *"O our Lord! I have settled my children in a valley that cannot be cultivated, close to Your sacred house. O our Lord! So that they establish Salāh..."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام also made the supplication *(du'ā)*, *"O my Lord! Make me one who establishes Salāh, and my progeny as well. O my Lord! Accept my prayer."* [*Surah 14, verse 40*]

Salāh is the most important facet of Islām after believe *(Imān)* and is obligatory *(Fardh)* when ill or healthy, on journey and at home, as long as one is conscious. Salāh is the only act of worship that requires the Adhān and Salāh is a remembrance of Allāh from beginning to end. Every part of the body is engaged in Allāh's subservience and submission during Salāh, the hands, tongue, eyes, etc. Salāh was the first injunction to be ordained and shall be the first to be asked about on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

The heart should be attentive and submissive to Allāh during salāh so as to comply with the dictates of *"establish Salāh for My remembrance."* When Salāh is performed correctly, the heart and soul desire to perform it and do not consider it a burden.

THE BENEFIT AND WISDOM OF GRAZING GOATS

Upon reaching Madyan, a pious old man married Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to his daughter on condition that he graze the old man's goats for eight or ten years. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did the work for ten years.

Sayyidina Utba bin Nadar رضي الله عنه reports that they [some Sahabah رضی الله عنهم] came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and he recited Surah Qasas (*Surah 28*) to them. When he reached the incident of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمsaid, *"Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام hired himself out for eight or ten years to safeguard his chastity and to fill his stomach."* [*Mishkāt p. 218*]

All the Prophets عليهم السلام grazed goats. The wisdom of this is that a person has to endure many difficulties in the process and gains experience with working with the weak. Goats have to be treated with patience and cannot be beaten because of their weakness. They have to be retrieved when they flee and then treated gently.

Goats are humble creatures and will not attack a person. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمpermitted people to perform Salāh in a goat's enclosure and prohibited performing Salāh in camel's pen. [*Mishkāt*]

The Prophets عليهم السلام gained invaluable experience when grazing goats, which helped them tremendously when dealing with the people. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمonce told the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم that every Prophet sent by Allāh, grazed goats. They asked, "You too, O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم?" "Yes," was the reply, "I grazed the goats of the Makkans and received a few Qirāt as wages." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 304*]· A Qirāt is a fraction of silver that was equivalent to the weight of four gains of barley.

Note: The Qur'ān uses three words when describing the transformation of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام's staff. The words "thu'bān" (a large serpent), "hayya" (a normal snake) and "jān" (a thin snake) are used. Some people have objected to this seeming discrepancy.

However, it will be noticed that there is no inconsistency at all. The word "thu'bān" is used only when describing the transformation of the staff in the presence of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, since it appeared as a large serpent only before him. On the occasion of Tuwa, Surah TāHā describes the reptile as "hayya," while Surah Naml and Surah Qasas depict it as a 'jān." There is no discrepancy

between these two verses because the word "hayya" would refer to any size of snake, even one that is a "jān" (a thin snake).

The third occasion that the staff is mentioned is when it was transformed as Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام contested the magicians (in Surah A'rāf, Surah Tā Hā and Surah Shu'arā). When describing this scene, none of the above three words are used. Therefore, there can be no objection there.

(25) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "O my Lord! Relieve my mind..." (26) "...make my task easy...' (27) "...and untie the knot on my tongue... (28) ".... so that they may understand my speech." (29) "Appoint for me an assistant from my family..." (30) ". . .my brother Hārūn" (31) "...Strengthen me with him..." (32) "... and make him a partner to my affairs..." (33) "...so that we may glorify You abundantly..." (34) "... and remember You in abundance. (35) "Undoubtedly You are Ever Watchful over us." (36) Allāh said, "You have been granted your request O Mūsa."

ALLĀH ACCEPTS THE REQUEST OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام THAT HIS BROTHER HĀRŪN عليه السلام BE APPOINTED AS HIS ASSISTANT

When Allāh entrusted Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام with the task of preaching to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun),* he entreated Allāh thus, *"O my Lord! Relieve my mind...* Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in Surah Nashr saying, *"Have We not relieved your mind?"* Peace of mind is an extremely great blessing from Allāh and is absolutely necessary to encourage a person to fulfil his tasks.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام also prayed to Allāh saying, *"make my task easy and untie the knot on my tongue so that they may understand my speech."* Some commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born with a stutter. Others say that, as a child, he once tugged at Pharaohs *(Fir'aun's)* beard. This happened while he was living in Pharaohs *(Fir'aun's)* palace. It then occurred to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* that this may be the very child who was expected to ruin Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* empire. He therefore intended to kill the child.

His wife intervened by telling Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* that the child was behaving just like, any other and the tugging at his beard should not be construed as being that very child regarding whom the above prophesy was made. They then decided to test the intelligence of the child by placing burning coals and jewels before him. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام took a coal and placed it in his mouth, causing his tongue to burn. Although the wound healed, the injury caused him

to stutter.

Some commentators have mentioned that Allāh did not cause the stuttering handicap to be completely cured because Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام added the phrase *"so that they may understand my speech."* Therefore, some degree of stuttering was still apparent, because of which Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* used say, *"Am I not better than this person who is ignoble and can hardly express himself?" Of course, it is possible that Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said this out of sheer obstinacy."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام also supplicated to Allāh saying, *"Appoint for me an assistant from my family..."* He then stipulated who the aide should be when he said, *"my brother Hārūn. Strengthen me with him and make him a partner to my affairs..."* It was in response to this supplication *(du'ā)* that Sayyidina Hārūn عليه السلام was also made a Prophet.

Allāh quotes Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام in Surah Qasas, *"My brother Hārūn is more eloquent in speech than me, so send him as an aide to me to endorse me. I fear that they will falsify me."* Allāh accepted his supplication *(du'ā)* and said, "We shall shortly strengthen your arm with your brother and grant the two of you a power, in the presence of which they will never reach you. The two of you and those who follow you will be victorious with Our signs." [*Surah Qasas (28), verse 35*]

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام requested Allāh for the support of Sayyidina Harūn رضي الله عنه and he added. *"...so that we my glorify You abundantly and remember You in abundance."* If every person engages in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, they will serve to remind each other without having to tell each other.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام concluded the supplication *(du'ā)* by saying, *"Undoubtedly You are Ever Watchful over us."* He understood that Allāh would be with them every step of the way.

"Allāh said, 'You have been granted your request O Mūsa." Allāh thus made Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام a Prophet and Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام joined him in Egypt..

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَيْكَ مَرَّةً أُخْرَىٰٓ ﴿37﴾ إِذْ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ ﴿38﴾ أَنِ ٱقْذِفِيهِ فِى
ٱلتَّابُوتِ فَٱقْذِفِيهِ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ فَلْيُلْقِهِ ٱلْيَمُّ بِٱلسَّاحِلِ يَأْخُذْهُ عَدُوٌّ لِّى وَعَدُوٌّ لَّهُۥ ۚ وَأَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ
مَحَبَّةً مِّنِّى وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِىٓ ﴿39﴾ إِذْ تَمْشِىٓ أُخْتُكَ فَتَقُولُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن
يَكْفُلُهُۥ ۖ فَرَجَعْنَٰكَ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّكَ كَىْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ۚ وَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا فَنَجَّيْنَٰكَ مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ
وَفَتَنَّٰكَ فُتُونًا ۚ فَلَبِثْتَ سِنِينَ فِىٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ ثُمَّ جِئْتَ عَلَىٰ قَدَرٍ يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿40﴾

(37) "We have indeed showered favours upon you a second time." (38) '... when We inspired your mother with what she was inspired (39) That, 'Place him in a box, then cast the box into the river. The river will wash him on to the bank, to be taken by My enemy and his enemy. I have cast on you love from Me and so that you may grow up under My supervision."' (40) "When your sister arrived

walking and she said 'Should I not show you who can care for him?' So We returned you to your mother so that her eyes may be cooled and she may not grieve. Then you killed a person and We saved you from grief and tried you with many trials. You stayed several years with the people of Madyan and then, O Mūsa, you have arrived to an appointed time."

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام IS PLACED IN A BOX AT BIRTH AND HE GROWS UP IN PHARAOH'S *(FIR'AUN'S)* PALACE

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and the Egyptians refused to allow the Bani Isrā'īl to leave Egypt so that they could be relieved of their tyranny. It once occurred that Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* fortune-teller told him that a child will be born among the Bani Isrā'īl who would destroy his empire. As a result of this, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* had every newborn boy of the Bani Isrā'īl killed. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was born, his mother was overly concerned about her child and did not know what to do. Allāh thus inspired her to, *"Place him in a box, then cast the box into the river. The river will wash him on to the bank, to be taken by My enemy and his enemy."*

According to a verse of Surah Qasas , Allāh told his mother, *neither fear nor grieve. We shall certainly return him to you and make him from the apostles."* When the box washed up on to the riverbank adjoining Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* palace, his wife spotted it and found the child inside.

Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"So the family of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) picked him up to be an enemy and a source of grief for them."* Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* feared that the child was the very same one who would destroy his kingdom and wished to kill the child. However, his wife said to him, *"A coolness for my eyes and yours. Do not slay him. Perchance he may benefit us or we may adopt him as a son. "*(because it is believed that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* did not have any children). [*Surah Qasas (28), verse 8*]

"I have cast on you love from Me..." Allāh made Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام beloved to all people. Whoever saw the young Mūsa عليه السلام would want to take him upon their laps. Therefore, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* agreed to his wife's proposal even though he still sensed the possibility of the child being the one that he was warned about.

Allāh reminds Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام further, *"...and so that you may grow up under My supervision."* While Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was being adopted by Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* wife, Sayyidina Mūsa's عليه السلام mother was extremely worried about her child. She was so perturbed that she was close to disclosing the secret if Allāh had not strengthened her heart. Verse 9 of Surah Qasas states, *"The heart of Mūsa's mother was restless. She would have almost revealed his condition if We had not strengthened her heart to be from those with conviction."* Therefore, she sent her daughter to see where the box went. Followed her mother's instructions, she saw how her brother was taken into the palace of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*. However, the people of the palace were unaware of her presence, as Allāh says in verse 10 of Surah Qasas, *"So she spied on him from afar without their knowledge."*

When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* tried to get the child to suckle, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام refused to suckle from every woman that was brought for the purpose. Eventually, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام's sister appeared and said, "Should I not

show you a family who will care for him on your behalf, and who will dote on him?" She then called for her mother, from whom the child suckled with great joy. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* then allowed her to raise the child and stipulated remuneration for the service. In this way Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was returned to his mother. Allāh says, *"So We returned you to your mother so that her eyes may be cooled and she may not grieve."*

Allāh relates the incident in Surah Qasas in the following words:

"We forbade all wet nurses to him from before and she [Mūsa's عليه السلام *sister] told them, 'Should I not show you a family who will care for him on your behalf and who will dote on him?' So We returned him to his mother so that her eyes be cooled and so that she may not grieve. And so that she may know that Allāh 's promise is true, .but most of them do not know."* [*Surah 28, verses 11, 12*]

After reminding Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام of the favours that he was blessed with during his childhood, Allāh reminded him of certain other favours. Consequently Allāh says, *"Then you killed a person and We saved you from grief and tried you with many trials."* The details of this will be mentioned in the commentary of verses 15 to 21 of Surah Qasas. However, the following brief facts will be cited here.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام grew up, he told the people that he was from the Bani Isrā'īl and that pharaoh *(Fir'aurn)* was not his father. It transpired one day that he noticed a Copt fighting with a person from the Bani Isrā'īl. The person from the Bani Isrā'īl called Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to help him. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام punched the Copt, but the punch killed him by mistake. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was extremely upset by this. However, no one found out how the person was killed.

The next day, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام again saw the same person from the Bani Isrā'īl fighting with another Copt. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام again came to his assistance, the person of the Bani Isrā'īl thought that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was going to assault him. Therefore he called out, *"O Mūsa! Do you wish to kill me like you killed the person yesterday?"* [*Surah Qasas (28), verse 19*]

When the news spread that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام killed the Copt, the ministers decided to kill Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام in return. Fortunately, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was warned by someone to escape from the town. Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام then left for Madyan, where he stayed for a while. Referring to this Allāh say. *"You stayed several years with the people of Madyan and then, O Mūsa, you have arrived to an appointed time."*

وَٱصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِى ﴿٤١﴾ ٱذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَأَخُوكَ بِـَٔايَٰتِى وَلَا تَنِيَا فِى ذِكْرِى ﴿٤٢﴾ ٱذْهَبَآ إِلَىٰ
فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُۥ طَغَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾ فَقُولَا لَهُۥ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُۥ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٤٤﴾ قَالَا رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا نَخَافُ
أَن يَفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَآ أَوْ أَن يَطْغَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾ قَالَ لَا تَخَافَآ إِنَّنِى مَعَكُمَآ أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾
فَأْتِيَاهُ فَقُولَآ إِنَّا رَسُولَا رَبِّكَ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ قَدْ جِئْنَٰكَ بِـَٔايَةٍ

مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَىٰ ﴿٤٧﴾ إِنَّا قَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْنَا أَنَّ الْعَذَابَ عَلَىٰ مَن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

(41) "I chose you for Myself" (42) "You and your brother should go with My signs and should not be lax in My remembrance." (43) "Proceed, the two of you to Pharaoh (Fir'aun). Indeed he is rebellious," (44) "Speak to him in gentle words, perchance he may take heed or fear. (45) They said, "O our Lord! We truly fear that he would be defiant or rebel against us." (46) Allāh said, "Have no fear, for verily I am with you, hearing and seeing." (47) Go to him and say, "We are indeed two messengers of our Lord, so send the Bani Isrā'īl with us and do not torment them. We have come to you with a sure sign from your Lord. May peace be on those who follow the guidance." (48) "It has been revealed to us that punishment shall be for those who falsify and turn away."

ALLĀH INSTRUCTS THE SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام AND SAYYIDINA HĀRŪN عليه السلام TO PREACH TO PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*, NOT TO BE LAX IN REMEMBRANCE *(DHIKR)* AND TO SPEAK TO HIM GENTLY

Earlier on Allāh told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *'I have selected you, so hearken to what is being revealed."* Here Allāh reiterates by saying, *"I chose you for Myself"* This was indeed an extremely great favour of Allāh upon Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

Thereafter Allāh goes on to tell him, *"You and your brother should go with My signs and should not be lax in My remembrance. Proceed, the two of you, to Pharaoh (Fir'aun). Indeed he is rebellious."*

Allāh advises them further, *"Speak to him in gentle words* (even though he may be harsh, because), *perchance he may take heed* (to what is said to him) *or fear (Me)."* This teaches people that Da'wa (calling people towards Allāh) should be given with patience and tolerance because it is more effective.

Expressing their fears, *"They said, 'O our Lord! We truly fear that he would be defiant or rebel against us."'*

Allāh reassured them by saying, *"Have no fear, for verily I am with you, hearing and seeing. Go to him and say, 'We are indeed two messengers of our Lord, so send the Bani Isrā'īl with us and do not torment them. (And to substantiate our claim to the Prophethood,) We have come to you with a sure sign from your Lord."* i.e. the miracles of the staff and the shining hand.

Allāh also commanded them to encourage Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* by telling him, *"May peace be on those who follow the guidance."* He was also to be warned with the words, *"It has been revealed to us that punishment shall be for those who falsify and turn away."* These verses emphasise the fact that a preacher should give people glad tidings as well as warnings.

It is not permissible to greet the disbelievers with the words, *"Assalāmu Alaikum."* Therefore, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم opened his letter addressed to

Hercules with the words, *'May peace be on those who follow the guidance."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 5*]

Surah Nāzi'āt states that Allāh said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام, *"Go to Pharaoh (Fir'aun), for verily he is rebellious. Tell him, 'Have you any desire to purify yourself and that I guide you to your Lord so that you fear Him?"'* [*Surah 79, verses 17-19*]

قَالَ فَمَن رَّبُّكُمَا يَٰمُوسَىٰ ﴿٤٩﴾ قَالَ رَبُّنَا ٱلَّذِىٓ أَعْطَىٰ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلْقَهُۥ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ ٱلْقُرُونِ ٱلْأُولَىٰ ﴿٥١﴾ قَالَ عِلْمُهَا عِندَ رَبِّى فِى كِتَٰبٍ لَّا يَضِلُّ رَبِّى وَلَا يَنسَى ﴿٥٢﴾ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّن نَّبَاتٍ شَتَّىٰ ﴿٥٣﴾ كُلُوا۟ وَٱرْعَوْا۟ أَنْعَٰمَكُمْ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ ﴿٥٤﴾ مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٥٥﴾

(49) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Then who is the Lord of you two, O Mūsa?" (50) He replied, "Our Lord is He Who granted each thing its creation, then guided it."(51) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Then what about the previous generations?" (52) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "The knowledge of them is with my Lord in the Book. My Lord does not err, nor does He forget." (53) "(My Lord is) He Who made the earth a bedding for you, made roads for you and sent water from the sky." Then We extracted by this (rain) various species of plants for you. (54) Eat and graze your animals. There are certainly signs in this for the intelligent. (55) We have created you from it (the earth), shall return you to it, and will extract you from it a second time.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام ADDRESSES PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)*

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام preached to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, the haughty king began to make various absurd statements. Some are mentioned here, and others are mentioned in Surah Shu'arā (*Surah 26, verses 18-34*).

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* claimed, *"I am your Lord, the most high!"* Therefore, when Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told him to accept Allāh, *"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said* (before the gathering of his courtiers), *'Then who is the Lord of you two, O Mūsa?"'*

In response to his question, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام replied, *"Our Lord is He Who granted each thing its creation..."* Allāh fashioned everything as He pleased, and granted them the limbs and capabilities that He willed.

"......then guided it." i.e. Allāh granted everything the understanding and faculties to ascertain what is beneficial and what is detrimental to it. This subject is too vast to be discussed here as it keeps expanding as one thinks deeper.

It is only Allāh that teaches a little infant to suck when given the mother's breast. Only He teaches that little chicken to run for a grain of food and teaches an animal to care for its young. Allāh has not granted hands to the animals

because they do not really require them.

Allāh has granted the spider the ability to secure its food by spinning a web, the lizard has to merely approach a light to eat the multitude of insects attracted there. Allāh has even allowed them to be able to walk upside down on a ceiling to do this. Allāh teaches the goats to lick their young clean and teaches the hen to remain with her eggs until they hatch. It is only Allāh who teaches cats to eat mice but never to put their mouths to a scorpion. There are millions of other such examples.

Another interpretation of the verse is that Allāh created mankind and then sent the Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures to guide them.

"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, 'Then what about the previous generations?"' i.e. What has become of them after their destruction? "Mūsa عليه السلام *said, 'The knowledge of them is with my Lord in the Book [the protected tablet (the Lawhu Mahfūz)]. My Lord does not err, nor does He forget.* "Allāh wili grant them all their just retribution in the Hereafter without error.

Further describing Allāh's attributes, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"Him Who made the earth a bedding for you, made roads for you and sent water from the sky."* Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام wished to impress upon Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)* mind that he has no say in all these affairs and can therefore never be Allāh.

Allāh Himself continues from the speech of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Allāh says, *"Then We extracted by this (rain) various species of plants for you. Eat and graze your animals. There are certainly signs in this for the intelligent."* The Arabic word *"naha"* is a verb that means 'to prevent.' The word *"nuha"* (translated above as "intelligence") is derived from this verb, and denotes something that prevents one from evil. Therefore, a person whose intelligence does not prevent him from evil cannot be called an intelligent person, irrespective of what people say.

Even the commonly used Arabic word *"aqal"* (intelligence) refers to something that keeps a person away from evil and vice.

"We have created you from it (from the earth), shall return you to it, and will extract you from it a second time [on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)]." Allāh says in Surah Mursalāt, *"Have We not made the earth a collector of the living and the dead?"* [*Surah 77, verses 25, 26*]

وَلَقَدْ أَرَيْنَٰهُ ءَايَٰتِنَا كُلَّهَا فَكَذَّبَ وَأَبَىٰ (56) قَالَ أَجِئْتَنَا لِتُخْرِجَنَا مِنْ أَرْضِنَا بِسِحْرِكَ
يَٰمُوسَىٰ (57) فَلَنَأْتِيَنَّكَ بِسِحْرٍ مِّثْلِهِۦ فَٱجْعَلْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّا نُخْلِفُهُۥ نَحْنُ
وَلَآ أَنتَ مَكَانًا سُوًى (58) قَالَ مَوْعِدُكُمْ يَوْمُ ٱلزِّينَةِ وَأَن يُحْشَرَ ٱلنَّاسُ ضُحًى (59)
فَتَوَلَّىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهُۥ ثُمَّ أَتَىٰ (60) قَالَ لَهُم مُّوسَىٰ وَيْلَكُمْ لَا تَفْتَرُوا۟ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا فَيُسْحِتَكُم بِعَذَابٍ ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ ٱفْتَرَىٰ (61) فَتَنَٰزَعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ

وَأَسَرُّوا۟ ٱلنَّجْوَىٰ ﴿٦٢﴾ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَٰنِ لَسَٰحِرَٰنِ يُرِيدَانِ أَن يُخْرِجَاكُم مِّنْ أَرْضِكُم
بِسِحْرِهِمَا وَيَذْهَبَا بِطَرِيقَتِكُمُ ٱلْمُثْلَىٰ ﴿٦٣﴾ فَأَجْمِعُوا۟ كَيْدَكُمْ ثُمَّ ٱئْتُوا۟ صَفًّا ۚ وَقَدْ أَفْلَحَ
ٱلْيَوْمَ مَنِ ٱسْتَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٤﴾

(56) Verily We showed Pharaoh (Fir'aun) all Our signs, yet he falsified and rejected. (57) He said, "Have you come to us to remove us from our land with your magic, O Mūsa?" (58) So we will certainly present the same kind of magic before you, so arrange an appointment between us, that neither us nor you will violate. Fix an open plain for this. (59) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "our appointment shall be on the day of adornment, and the people should be gathered at midmorning. (60) Then Pharaoh (Fir'aun) went back, mustered his resources and returned. (61) Mūsa told them, "Woe be to you! Do not invent lies against Allāh, for then He will annihilate you with a punishment Whoever has' invented lies has certainly lost." (62) They contested the issue between themselves and then secretly convened. (63) They said, "These are but two magicians who want to remove you from your land with their magic and destroy your excellent ways." (64) "So assemble your plans and present yourselves in rows. Only the victor shall succeed today."

PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* TERMS THE MIRACLES OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام AS MAGIC AND THEY FIX A TIME FOR A CONTEST WITH OTHER MAGICIANS

After Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام explained to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* about Allāh and showed him the miracles of the staff and the hand, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* still refused to believe. Allāh says, *"Verily We showed Pharaoh (Fir'aun) all Our signs, yet he falsified and rejected."* He said that the miracles were the products of magic and added, *"Have you come to us to remove us from our land with your magic, O Mūsa?"*

When Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* told his courtiers that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was performing acts of magic, they advised that he send an emissary to all the towns with the express motive of gathering all the magicians to challenge Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* then said to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"So we will certainly present the same kind of magic before you, so arrange an appointment between us, that neither us nor you will violate. Fix an open plain for this."*

Deeming the opportunity feasible, *"Mūsa عليه السلام said, 'Your appointment shall be on the day of adornment* (the day when they held their customary celebrations), *and the people should be gathered at midmorning.'"* This was the perfect opportunity to present the case before all the people.

Allāh says, *"Then Pharaoh (Fir'aun) went back, mustered his resources and returned."*

The day had not yet arrived, but Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his followers were actively plotting their moves. Seeing this, *"Mūsa told them, 'Woe be to you! Do not invent lies against Allāh* (by referring to the miracles given by Him ~~to~~ His Prophet

as magic), *for then He will annihilate you with a punishment. Whoever has invented lies has certainly lost."*

When the magicians heard what Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام had said, *"They contested the issue between themselves and then secretly convened."* They decided that they would follow Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام if he defeated them. Other commentators mentioned that when the magicians heard Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saying, *"Do not invent lies against Allāh, for then He will annihilate you with a punishment,"* they decided not to face him. However, Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* forced them to.

While some were scared of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and others desired proximity to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, they said in his presence, *"These are but two magicians who want to remove you from your land with their magic and destroy your excellent ways. So assemble your plans and present yourselves in rows, only the victor shall succeed today."*

Because Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his associates were worldly minded, they feared only the loss of their worldly possessions and properties. People who do not have conviction in the Hereafter always consider the loss of their worldly gains as the greatest loss. The same prevails today. Those in power always fear the loss of their authority and will do anything to maintain their positions, including openly lying to the public and even murder.

قَالُوا۟ يَـٰمُوسَىٰٓ إِمَّآ أَن تُلْقِىَ وَإِمَّآ أَن نَّكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَلْقَىٰ ﴿٦٥﴾ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا۟ ۖ فَإِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيُّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِن سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَىٰ ﴿٦٦﴾ فَأَوْجَسَ فِى نَفْسِهِۦ خِيفَةً مُّوسَىٰ ﴿٦٧﴾ قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَأَلْقِ مَا فِى يَمِينِكَ تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوٓا۟ ۖ إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا۟ كَيْدُ سَـٰحِرٍ ۖ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ ٱلسَّاحِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ ﴿٦٩﴾ فَأُلْقِىَ ٱلسَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوٓا۟ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَـٰرُونَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿٧٠﴾

(65) They said "O Mūsa: Either you throw; or we be first to throw. (66) He replied, "You rather throw." Then their ropes and their staffs suddenly seemed to appear like slithering snakes to him on account of their magic. (67) So Mūsa sensed a bit of fear in his heart. (68) We said, "Do not fear! You shall definitely remain high." (69) "Throw down what is in your right hand and it will devour what they have colluded. They have merely contrived the plot of a magician, and a magician will never succeed wherever he goes." (70) So the magicians were cast into prostration saying, "We believe in the Lord of Harūn and Mūsa."

THE MAGICIANS COMPETE WITH SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام AND THEN FALL INTO PROSTRATION AFTER CONCEDING DEFEAT

When the magicians appeared on the plain, *"They said, 'O Mūsa! Either you throw, or we be first to throw.' He replied, 'You rather throw.' Then their ropes and their staffs suddenly seemed to appear like slithering snakes to him on account of their magic."*

They mesmerised the eyes of the people and everyone thought that these were real snakes.

Witnessing this scene, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام *"sensed a bit of fear in his heart."* However, Allāh reassured him saying, *"Do not fear! You shall definitely remain high."*

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام then threw down his staff at the command of Allāh, where after his snake devoured all the imaginary ones of the magicians. Allāh says, *"They have merely contrived the plot of a magician, and a magnificent will never succeed wherever he goes."*

In another verse, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told the magicians, *"You have displayed magic. Soon Allāh shall obliterate it. Indeed Allāh does not rectify the deeds of those who spread corruption."*

When the magicians realised that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was not demonstrating magic, they *"were cast into prostration saying, 'We believe in the Lord of Harūn and Mūsa."'* The verse does not sat that they fell into prostration, but says that they were *"cast into prostration."* This denotes that they were helpless in the matter and were forced to prostrate by the truth of what they saw. They even forgot the tyranny of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* at that moment.

History is witness to the fact that thousands of people have braved the tyranny of the worst types of people when true Belief *(Imān)* entered their hearts. Nothing could then sway them off the course of truth.

قَالَ ءَامَنتُمْ لَهُۥ قَبْلَ أَنْ ءَاذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ ٱلَّذِى عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱلسِّحْرَ ۖ فَلَأُقَطِّعَنَّ
أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُم مِّنْ خِلَٰفٍ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ فِى جُذُوعِ ٱلنَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ أَيُّنَآ أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا
وَأَبْقَىٰ (71) قَالُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَآءَنَا مِنَ ٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ وَٱلَّذِى فَطَرَنَا ۖ فَٱقْضِ مَآ أَنتَ
قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِى هَٰذِهِ ٱلْحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنْيَآ (72) إِنَّآ ءَامَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَٰيَٰنَا وَمَآ
أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ ٱلسِّحْرِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ (73) إِنَّهُۥ مَن يَأْتِ رَبَّهُۥ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ جَهَنَّمَ
لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ (74) وَمَن يَأْتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ
ٱلدَّرَجَٰتُ ٱلْعُلَىٰ (75) جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ مَن
تَزَكَّىٰ (76)

(71) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) said, "Do you believe in Mūsa before I permitted you? He must surely be your superior who taught you magic. I shall certainly sever your hands and your legs on opposite ends and will surely crucify you on the trunks of date palms. Then you will shortly learn who of us is more severe in punishment and whose punishment is more lingering." (72) The magicians replied, "We shall never prefer you to the clear signs that have come to us and to

the One Who has created us. So do as you decide. You can only make a decision in this worldly life." (73) "We have verily believed in our Lord so that He may forgive us for our sins and for the magic that you have forced us to practise. Allāh is Best and Eternal." (74) Indeed whosoever comes to his Lord as a criminal, then his shall be Hell, where he shall neither live nor die. (75) As for him who comes to his Lord as a believer, having performed good deeds, then these people will have the lofty ranks. (76) The eternal gardens of Heaven (Jannah) beneath which rivers flow. Therein they shall abide forever. This is the reward for those who are pure.

THE MAGICIANS REPLY TO THE THREATS OF PHARAOH *(FIR'OUN)*

Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was publicly humiliated when the magicians believed in Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام and fell into prostration. Being unable to do anything, he expressed his fury and told them, *"Do you believe in Mūsa before I permitted you? He must surely be your superior who taught you magic."* Surah A'rāf states that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* accused the magicians of collaborating with Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to remove the people from their land. He told them, *"Do you believe in Him before I have permitted you? Surely this must be a grand scheme that you all devised in the city to remove its inhabitants from it. Soon you shall come to know!"* [*Surah 7, verse 123*]

He then pronounced his punishment for them when he said, *"I shall certainly sever your hands and your legs on opposite ends and will surely crucify you on the trunks of date palms. Then you will shortly learn who of us is more severe in punishment and whose punishment is more lingering."*

He made the final statement in reference to the earlier statement of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, in which Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام said, *"It has been revealed to us that punishment shall be for those who falsify and turn away."* Therefore Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* meant to say that instead of him and his party being punished, they will see that they [the believers *(Mu'minīn)*] will be punished first and that his [Pharaoh's *(Fir'aun's)*] punishment was the most severe.

"According to another verse of the Qur'ān, the magicians remained perseverant and replied, 'indeed we shall return to our Lord." [*Surah A'rāf (7), verse 125*]

They told Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, *"We shall never prefer you to the clear signs that have come to us and to the One Who has created us. So do as you decide. You can only make a decision in this worldly life"* i.e. you have no say in the matters of the Hereafter, where we will enjoy eternal bliss. The pain and suffering of this world is but brief.

They continued to say, *"We have verily believed in our Lord so that He may forgive us for our sins and for the magic that you have forced us to practise. Allāh is Best and Eternal."*

Surah Shu'arā says that they said, *"We desire that our Lord forgives our sins because we have been the first believers."* They realised that they should fear only Allāh and aspire only for His grace and bounty.

The verses of the Qur'ān do not mention whether Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* actually

carried out his threats. Allāma Ibn kathīr رحمة الله عليه believes that he did as he threatened. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Ubaid bin Umair رحمة الله عليه say that these people were magicians at the beginning of the day and martyrs by the evening.

The verses hereafter have been described as being part of the magician's speech. However, other commentators say that it is not. Allāh says, *'indeed whosoever comes to his Lord as a criminal (as a Disbeliever), then his shall be Hell, where he shall neither live nor die."* There will be no death in Hell and the life there cannot be termed as life because of its misery.

"As for him who comes to his Lord as a believer, having performed good deeds, then these people will have the lofty ranks."

Their reward shall be *"The eternal gardens of Heaven (Jannah) beneath which rivers flow. Therein they shall abide forever. This is the reward for those who are pure."* i.e. pure from all evils and sin.

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِى فَٱضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَّا تَخَٰفُ دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ بِجُنُودِهِۦ فَغَشِيَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمْ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَأَضَلَّ فِرْعَوْنُ قَوْمَهُۥ وَمَا هَدَىٰ ﴿٧٩﴾

(77) Indeed, We revealed to Mūsa, "Leave with My bondsmen during the night, then make for them a dry road in the sea. Neither should you fear anyone pursuing you, nor should you have any other fear." (78) So Pharaoh (Fir'aun) followed them with his army and there covered them that of the sea that did cover them. (79) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) misled his nation and did not guide them.

ALLĀH COMMANDS SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام TO LEAVE WITH HIS PEOPLE DURING THE NIGHT AND NOT TO FEAR PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS ARMY PURSUE THEM AND ARE DROWNED IN THE SEA

The Bani Isrā'īl had to leave Egypt to be safe from Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, but he would not allow them to. However, Allāh revealed to Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saying, *"Leave (Egypt) with My bondsmen during the night, then* (when you reach the coast, strike the sea with your staff and) *make for them a dry road in the sea. Neither should you fear anyone pursuing you, nor should you have any other fear."*

It was already sunrise when Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* learnt that the Bani Isrā'īl had left. *"So Pharaoh (Fir'aun) followed them with his army..."* When the Bani Isrā'īl saw the army approaching them, they thought that they would be overtaken. However, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام reassured them by telling them that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun's)* army will never apprehend them because *"My Lord is with me and He will certainly guide me."*

Then Allāh commanded him to strike the sea with his staff, causing it to divide into twelve pathways for the Bani Isrā'īl to cross through. Pharaoh

(Fir'aun) and his army followed the Bani Isrā'īl, but entered the waters only after the Bani Isrā'īl has already crossed over. It was then that *"there covered them that of the sea that did cover them."* The walls of water that stood as high as mountains crashed on to them and drowned them.

In Arabic, something is not mentioned specifically to show its large proportions. Therefore, the phrase is used *"there covered them that of the sea that did cover them."*

"Pharaoh (Fir'aun) misled his nation and did not guide them." He was drowned and caused all his people to drown with him.

Referring to Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* and his followers, Allāh says in Surah Qasas, *"We made them leaders who called towards the Fire. They will not be assisted in the Hereafter. We set a curse after them in this world, and on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) they shall be amongst the hateful."* [*Surah 28, verse 41, 42*]

يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ قَدۡ أَنجَيۡنَٰكُم مِّنۡ عَدُوِّكُمۡ وَوَٰعَدۡنَٰكُمۡ جَانِبَ ٱلطُّورِ ٱلۡأَيۡمَنَ وَنَزَّلۡنَا عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡمَنَّ
وَٱلسَّلۡوَىٰ ﴿80﴾ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقۡنَٰكُمۡ وَلَا تَطۡغَوۡاْ فِيهِ فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيۡكُمۡ غَضَبِيۖ وَمَن
يَحۡلِلۡ عَلَيۡهِ غَضَبِي فَقَدۡ هَوَىٰ ﴿81﴾ وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٞ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا ثُمَّ ٱهۡتَدَىٰ
﴿82﴾

(80) O Bani Isrā'īl! We have certainly rescued you from your enemy, made a tryst with you at the right side of Mount Tūr and sent for you Manna and Salwā. (81) Eat from the pure things that We have provided for you and do not transgress the limits, for then My wrath shall descend on you. The one upon whom My wrath descends has certainly fallen. (82) Verily I am the Most Forgiving towards the one who repents, believes, does good deeds and is thereafter rightly guided.

ALLĀH ADDRESSES THE BANI ISRĀĪL, REMINDING THEM THAT HE SAVED THEM FROM THEIR ENEMY AND GAVE THEM MANNA AND SALWA FROM THE HEAVENS

Allāh says, *"O Bani Isrā'īl! We have certainly rescued you from your enemy, made a tryst with you at the right side of Mount Tūr..."* Allāh called Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام to the right side of Mount Tūr, where he was given the Torah. Since the Torah was for the benefit of the Bani Isrā'īl, Allāh says that the appointment at Mount Tūr was an appointment for them.

Certain commentators have translated the word "ayman" (translated above as *"right")* as 'blessed' i.e. the tryst took place on the blessed side of the mountain. This side of the mountain was certainly blessed because the Torah was received there.

The third bounty that Allāh reminds them about is that He *". . . sent for you Manna and Salwa."* This discussion has been given in the commentary of verse 57 of Surah Baqarah.

"Eat from the pure things that We have provided for you and do not transgress the limits..." *i.e.* you should not be ungrateful, should not use these things for sinful purposes, should not waste them, nor oppress others with them. Allāh then warns them of the consequences of transgression. He say that if they transgress, *"then My wrath shall descend on you. The one upon whom My wrath descends certainly fallen."*

"Verily I am the Most Forgiving towards the one who repents, believes, does good deeds and is thereafter rightly guided. This verses refers to repentance from disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk).* It is for this reason that repentance is mentioned before belief. When a person adopts the above behaviour, then Allāh will certainly forgive him.

۞ وَمَآ أَعۡجَلَكَ عَن قَوۡمِكَ يَٰمُوسَىٰ (83) قَالَ هُمۡ أُوْلَآءِ عَلَىٰٓ أَثَرِي وَعَجِلۡتُ إِلَيۡكَ
رَبِّ لِتَرۡضَىٰ (84) قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدۡ فَتَنَّا قَوۡمَكَ مِنۢ بَعۡدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ ٱلسَّامِرِيُّ (85) فَرَجَعَ
مُوسَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ غَضۡبَٰنَ أَسِفٗاۚ قَالَ يَٰقَوۡمِ أَلَمۡ يَعِدۡكُمۡ رَبُّكُمۡ وَعۡدًا حَسَنًاۚ أَفَطَالَ
عَلَيۡكُمُ ٱلۡعَهۡدُ أَمۡ أَرَدتُّمۡ أَن يَحِلَّ عَلَيۡكُمۡ غَضَبٞ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ فَأَخۡلَفۡتُم مَّوۡعِدِي (86)
قَالُواْ مَآ أَخۡلَفۡنَا مَوۡعِدَكَ بِمَلۡكِنَا وَلَٰكِنَّا حُمِّلۡنَآ أَوۡزَارٗا مِّن زِينَةِ ٱلۡقَوۡمِ فَقَذَفۡنَٰهَا
فَكَذَٰلِكَ أَلۡقَى ٱلسَّامِرِيُّ (87) فَأَخۡرَجَ لَهُمۡ عِجۡلٗا جَسَدٗا لَّهُۥ خُوَارٞ فَقَالُواْ هَٰذَآ
إِلَٰهُكُمۡ وَإِلَٰهُ مُوسَىٰ فَنَسِيَ (88) أَفَلَا يَرَوۡنَ أَلَّا يَرۡجِعُ إِلَيۡهِمۡ قَوۡلٗا وَلَا يَمۡلِكُ لَهُمۡ
ضَرّٗا وَلَا نَفۡعٗا (89) وَلَقَدۡ قَالَ لَهُمۡ هَٰرُونُ مِن قَبۡلُ يَٰقَوۡمِ إِنَّمَا فُتِنتُم بِهِۦۖ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ
ٱلرَّحۡمَٰنُ فَٱتَّبِعُونِي وَأَطِيعُوٓاْ أَمۡرِي (90) قَالُواْ لَن نَّبۡرَحَ عَلَيۡهِ عَٰكِفِينَ حَتَّىٰ يَرۡجِعَ إِلَيۡنَا مُوسَىٰ
(91) قَالَ يَٰهَٰرُونُ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذۡ رَأَيۡتَهُمۡ ضَلُّوٓاْ (92) أَلَّا تَتَّبِعَنِۖ أَفَعَصَيۡتَ أَمۡرِي (93)
قَالَ يَبۡنَؤُمَّ لَا تَأۡخُذۡ بِلِحۡيَتِي وَلَا بِرَأۡسِيٓۖ إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَن تَقُولَ فَرَّقۡتَ بَيۡنَ بَنِيٓ
إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ وَلَمۡ تَرۡقُبۡ قَوۡلِي (94)

(83) "What has made you hasten ahead of your people, O Mūsa?" (84) He replied, "They are on my track. I have hastened to You, O my Lord, so that You be pleased." (85) Allāh said, "Indeed, We have certainly tested your people after you) and Sāmiri has led them astray." (86) Then Mūsa عليه السلام returned to his people in anger and remorse. He said, "O my people! Has your Lord not made you a fair promise? Has too much time elapsed for you or did you wish that the wrath of your Lord descend upon you, because of which you broke the tryst made with me?" (87) They said, "We have not broken the tryst made with you of our own accord, but we were laden with the burdens of a nation and cast it off In this way Sāmiri cast the mould." (88) So he made for them a calf that was a

body which made the sounds of a cow. They said, "This is your Lord and the Lord of Mūsa, but he forgot. (89) Could they not see that it could not reply to them nor did it possess the ability to benefit or harm them? (90) Harūn عليه السلام definitely told them before, "O my people! You are merely being tested with this. Without doubt, your Lord is the Merciful, so follow me and obey me." (91) They replied, "We shall certainly remain devoted to it until Mūsa returns to us." (92) Mūsa said, "O Harūn! When you saw them going astray, what prevented you..." (93) "...from coming to me? Did you disobey my instruction?" (94) Harūn said, "O son of my mother! Do not grab my beard or my head. I feared that you would say, 'You divided the Bani Isrā'īl and did not wait for my word.'"

THE BANI ISRĀĪL WORSHIP A GOLDEN CALF MADE BY SĀMIRI IN THE ABSENCE OF SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام

After the Bani Isrā'īl left Egypt, they experienced many events before reaching Palestine. Of these was the revelation of the Torah and the descent of Manna and Salwa, as mentioned in the previous verses. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 227*) records that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام chose 70 persons from the Bani Isrā'īl to accompany him to Mount Tūr. However, he walked ahead of them and told them to meet him there. Referring to this, Allāh asked him, *"What has made you hasten ahead of your people, O Mūsa? He replied, 'They are on my track. I have hastened to You, O my Lord, so that You be pleased."*

The women of the Bani Isrā'īl had borrowed jewellery from the Coptic women to use in a celebration of theirs. However, they never got the opportunity to return it because they had to leave Egypt very suddenly one night. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left for Mount Tūr, Sāmiri (who was a goldsmith) gathered all this gold jewellery and cast the mould of a calf. Since this calf was made to emit the sounds of a cow, people began to worship it.

While Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام was at the mountain, Allāh informed him of the proceeding by telling them, *"Indeed, We have certainly tested your people after you and Sāmiri has led them astray."*

"Then Mūsa عليه السلام returned to his people in anger and remorse. He said, 'O my people! Has your Lord not made you a fair promise? (You were supposed to await my return with the Torah.) Has too much time elapsed for you (Did I go away for such a long period that you lost hope of receiving the Torah?) or did you (deliberately) wish that the wrath of your Lord descend upon you, because of which you broke the tryst made with me?"

The Bani Isrā'īl replied most foolishly. *"They said, 'We have not broken the tryst made with you of our own accord, but we were laden with the burdens of a the nation (i.e. the jewellery of the Coptic women) and cast it off.* In this way Sāmiri cast the mould.

"So he made for them a calf that was a body which made the sounds of a cow. They said, 'This is your Lord and the Lord of Mūsa, but he forgot." They claimed that Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام forgot that this was his Lord (Allāh forbid!) and rather went to the mountain to get the Torah there.

The Bani Isrā'īl had grown accustomed to seeing the Copts worshipping

idols (including the 'Cow). Since it was their desire to do that same, that they once told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that he should make an idol for them as well (this they said after crossing the sea, as was discussed in verse 138 of Surah A'rāf). Therefore, when Sāmiri made the calf, they easily succumbed to the temptation of worshipping it. They were so intoxicated by their passions and foolishness that they even claimed that the calf was Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام's Lord. Their centuries' old exposure' to polytheism *(shirk)* finally took its toll on them.

Allāh expresses their ignorance when he says, *"Could they not see that it (the calf) could not reply to them nor did it possess the ability to benefit or harm them?"* It is obvious that such a creature can never be worshipped.

The statement of the Bani Isrā'īl that *"We have not broken the tryst made with you of our own accord,"* was intended to place the blame squarely on the shoulders of Sāmiri. However, this does not absolve them from blame because Sāmiri did not force them to worship the calf.

"....but we were laden with the burdens of the nation and cast it off" Some commentators say that Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام told them that they were sinful because they had the possessions of others with them. Therefore, the jewellery was a burden of sin for them. He advised them to rather throw it away.

Other commentators say that Sāmiri advised them in this manner, but used this as a ploy to gather all the gold for the calf.

When wealth is seized from the disbelievers in war, it will become halāl booty for the Muslims. However, this applies only to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Booty was not permissible for the previous Ummahs. Another aspect to consider is that the Bani Isrā'īl merely borrowed the jewellery from the Copts. Therefore, it was given to them as a trust, which they were obliged to return.

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated for Madinah, he had many possessions of the disbelievers with him, which they kept as trusts with him. However, he ensured that these were returned to them by leaving Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه at his house to discharge this responsibility.

Even if it is proven that the jewellery was in the class of booty, it would still not be permissible for the people because it was not distributed properly. Later on Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did as the previous Prophets عليهم السلام always did to the booty i.e. burn it (as will be mentioned in the forthcoming verses). However, the booty of the previous Prophets عليهم السلام was always burnt by a fire that came from the skies. The calf was not burnt in this manner because its burning in a natural manner served to teach the Bani Isrā'īl that the very thing that they claimed was a god could be burnt like any other thing of this world.

The burning of the calf by Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام therefore represented the burning of booty by the heavenly fire. By understanding this, one will not object to the fact that Sayyidīna Mūsa عليه السلام burnt the possessions of other people and should therefore be responsible for it. It is also not possible to raise this objection because the leader of the believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* has the right to destroy objects of sin.

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام left for the mountain, he left his brother Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام in charge. Therefore, when they began worshipping the calf, *"Harūn عليه السلام definitely told them before, 'O my people! You are merely being tested with it. Without doubt, your Lord is the Merciful, so follow me and obey me."*

However, the calf was now a part of their own souls. They therefore refused to listen to him and said, *"We shall certainly remain devoted to it until Mūsa returns to us."*

When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام did return, he could not contain his emotions. He cast down the tablets of the Torah, breaking some of them, and grabbed the beard and head of Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام saying, *"O Harūn! When you saw them going astray, what prevented you from coming to me? Did you disobey my instruction?"*

"Harūn said, 'O son of my mother! Do not grab my beard or my head. I feared that you would say, 'You divided the Bani Isrā'īl and did not wait for my word...."

Verse 150 of Surah A'rāf states that Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"O my mother's son! Verily the people regarded me to be weak and nearly killed me. So let not the enemies laugh at me and do not count me among the oppressive folk."* Thereafter "Mūsa said, 'O my Lord! Forgive me and my brother and enter us in Your mercy. Surely You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Receiving information regarding an incident is not the same as witnessing it one's self. When Allāh informed Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام that the Bani Isrā'īl were worshipping a calf, he was not as greatly affected as to throw down the tablets of the Torah. However, when he witnessed it himself, he cast them aside in utter disbelief, causing them to break."* [*The Musnad of Ahmad v. 1 p. 271*]

Allāh says Surah A'rāf, *"When the anger of Mūsa abated, he took hold of the tablets. Written in its script was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord."* [*Ṣurah 7, verse 154*]

Commentators mention that there were three groups among the Bani Isrā'īl at that time. The first group of 12000 were with Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام. The second were from those who worshipped the calf, but intended to abandon this practice once Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام forbade them. The third group adamantly refused to forsake their worship even after the return of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام. They were the ones who claimed that the calf was also the Lord of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

When Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام heard the reply of the second two groups, he separated himself and his group of 12000 from them. When Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام returned, he told him that he had disassociated from these people but thought it improper to fight them for it would have caused more dissention and division among the Bani Isrā'īl.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام accepted this reason and prayed to Allāh to forgive both of them.

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَٰسَٰمِرِيُّ ﴿٩٥﴾ قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِّنْ أَثَرِ ٱلرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا وَكَذَٰلِكَ سَوَّلَتْ لِى نَفْسِى ﴿٩٦﴾ قَالَ فَٱذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ أَن تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّن تُخْلَفَهُۥ ۖ وَٱنظُرْ إِلَىٰٓ إِلَٰهِكَ ٱلَّذِى ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا ۖ لَّنُحَرِّقَنَّهُۥ ثُمَّ لَنَنسِفَنَّهُۥ فِى ٱلْيَمِّ نَسْفًا ﴿٩٧﴾ إِنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿٩٨﴾

(95) Mūsa said, "What have you to say, O Sāmiri?" (96) He replied, "I saw what they did not see. So I took a handful from the tracks of the messenger and cast it. Thus did my soul entice me. (97) Mūsa عليه السلام said, "Go! Your punishment in this world shall be that you wander around saying, 'Do not touch!' You certainly have an appointment that you cannot miss. Look at your deity that you remained so devoted to. We will surely burn it and then scatter it well in the ocean." (98) Your deity is only Allāh, besides Whom there is no other deity. His knowledge encompasses everything.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA عليه السلام SPEAKS TO SĀMIRI, CURSES HIM AND BURNS THE CALF

After addressing the Bani Isrā'īl and Sayyidina Harūn عليه السلام, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام turned his attention towards Sāmiri. *"Mūsa said, 'What have you to say, O Sāmiri?' He replied, 'I saw what they did not see. So I took a handful from the tracks of the messenger and, cast it. Thus did my soul entice me.'"*

While some commentators mention that Sāmiri was from the Bani Isrā'īl, others maintain that he was from the Copts of Egypt and crossed the sea with the Bani Isrā'īl pretending to be a believer. When Jibrīl عليه السلام used to come on horseback to assist the Bani Isrā'īl, Sāmiri noticed that every piece of ground on which the horse stepped used to flourish. Realising that the ground was unique, he placed a handful of it in the calf. He referred to this when he told Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"So I took a handful from the tracks of the messenger and cast it."*

The question is asked how did Sāmiri recognise Jibrīl عليه السلام? The reply is quite simple. Just as Allāh made him realise that the tracks of the horse caused the earth to flourish, so too did Allāh cause him to realise the identity of the horseman.

The author of "Durrul Manthūr" and others have reported that Sāmiri was born to a woman of the Bani Isrā'īl. Fearing that Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* would kill her child, she hid him in a cave. Allāh sent Jibrīl عليه السلام to tend to the child. Allāh also caused honey to emerge from the one finger and milk from the other for the child. Therefore, Sāmiri could recognise Jibrīl عليه السلام.

The soil ***(soil : dust taken beneath the horse of Jibr'il** عليه السلام **has life giving power.)*** taken from beneath the horse of Jibrīl عليه السلام caused the calf to give off the lowing sounds of a cow. The foolishness of the polytheists causes them to worship anything that seems to be against the norm. Therefore, the Bani Isrā'īl

were so taken aback by the realistic nature of the calf that they failed to realise that even if it were real, it was still not worthy of being worshipped.

It is often the trickery of many false saints that they exert themselves to practise a strange skill so that people fall head over heels for them.

Addressing Sāmiri, *"Mūsa* عليه السلام *said, 'Go!* (Because you beguiled people to be attracted to you) *Your punishment in this world shall be that you wander around saying, 'Do not touch!"* Allāh made it such that whenever someone touched Sāmiri, or he touched anyone, both persons would be immediately affected by severe fever. Therefore, people stayed far from him and he vehemently avoided them.

That was his punishment in this world. With regard to the Hereafter, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told him, *"You certainly have an appointment (with punishment) that you cannot miss."*

The Hindus of India hold beliefs with regard to the worship of cows and touching. It is possible that they were influenced by the Bani Isrā'īl and Sāmiri in these beliefs. They could have attached some customary importance to the punishment of Sāmiri, resulting in their present-day practices.

To emphasise to Sāmiri and to all his followers that their calf was not worthy of worship, Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام told him, *'Look at your deity that you remained so devoted to. We will surely burn it and then scatter it well in the ocean."* It is also possible that the Hindus derived their practice of cremation and casting the ashes into a river from this.

Another question that arises is that how could the calf burn to ashes when it was made from gold and silver? It ought to melt instead. Some commentators have mentioned that the sand that caused it to make sounds transformed it into a living calf of flesh and blood. Other commentators say that the calf was first broken to pieces before being burnt. However, this will still not cause it to burn to ashes.

The best reply therefore, is to say that Allāh caused the gold and silver to become ashes. Nothing is impossible for Him. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 63*]

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام continued to say, *"Your deity is only Allāh, besides Whom there is no other deity. His knowledge encompasses everything."* The last sentence refutes the beliefs of all polytheists because if their gods and idols have no knowledge of even themselves, how can they possibly compare with Allāh, Whose *"knowledge encompasses everything?"*

كَذَٰلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنۢبَآءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ ۚ وَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَٰكَ مِن لَّدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾ مَّنْ أَعْرَضَ
عَنْهُ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَحْمِلُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وِزْرًا ﴿١٠٠﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهِ ۖ وَسَآءَ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ حِمْلًا ﴿١٠١﴾
يَوْمَ يُنفَخُ فِى ٱلصُّورِ ۚ وَنَحْشُرُ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ زُرْقًا ﴿١٠٢﴾ يَتَخَٰفَتُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ
إِلَّا عَشْرًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ نَّحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذْ يَقُولُ أَمْثَلُهُمْ طَرِيقَةً إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا يَوْمًا

(99) Thus do We narrate to you some of the incidents that have passed. We have certainly given you advice from Ourselves. (100) Whoever turns away from it will surely carry a burden on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). (101) They will remain in this condition forever. It shall be a terrible burden indeed for them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). (102) The day when the trumpet will be blown and the criminals shall be gathered with blue eyes. (103) They will whisper to each other saying, "You have tarried only for ten days. (104) We know best what they speak, when the most sensible of them will say, "You have only tarried for a single day."

THOSE WHO ARE AVERSE TO ALLĀH'Ş ADVICE WILL CARRY A BURDEN ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QTYĀMAH)*, THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE RAISED WITH BLUF EYES AND PEOPLE WILL THINK THAT THEY LIVED ONLY FOR A DAY IN THE WORLD

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that just as he has been informed about the story of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام, *"Thus do We narrate to you some of the incidents that have passed. We have certainly given you advice from Ourselves."* This refers to the Qur'ān, which is a universal advice to the creation.

Those who take heed to this advice will attain salvation. However, *"Whoever turns away from it will surely carry a burden (of disbeliefs) on the day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). They will remain in this condition (of punishment) forever."*

"It shall be a terrible burden indeed for them on the day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). The day when the trumpet will be blown..." When the trumpet is blown the first time, everything in existence will cease to remain alive and will be destroyed. Thereafter, when it is blown for the second time, people will be raised from their graves. Then *"the criminals* (the disbelievers) *shall be gathered with blue eyes."* This will be a sign of the disbelievers on the day of Judgement.

The disbelievers will be so terrified on that day that they will question each other as to how long were they in their graves. Allāh says, *"They will whisper to each other saying, 'You have tarried only for ten days.* " While they always denied resurrection, they will now be totally surprised to learn that they have already been raised.

"We know best what they speak, when the most sensible of them will say, 'You have tarried only for a single day." This person will have tendered the best reply because the entire period in the grave will only seem like a day when compared to the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

Allāh mentioned in verse 97 of Surah Isrā (*Surah 17*), *"We shall raise them on their faces on the day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), blind, dumb and deaf"* Since the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* will be so lengthy, people will undergo various changes during its course. The various verses of the Qur'ān refer to these various stages.

Allāh says in Surah Rūm, *"When the day when Judgment day (Qiyāmah) will*

dawn, the criminals will swear on oath saying, 'We never tarried more than a moment."' [*Surah 30, verse 55*]

The concluding verse of Surah Nāzi'āt states, *"The day when they will witness* Judgment *(Qiyāmah), it will seem to them that they only tarried an evening or a morning."* The above are all opinions of various people on the day of Judgement.

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ ٱلْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنسِفُهَا رَبِّى نَسْفًا ﴿105﴾ فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ﴿106﴾ لَّا
تَرَىٰ فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَلَآ أَمْتًا ﴿107﴾ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَّبِعُونَ ٱلدَّاعِىَ لَا عِوَجَ لَهُۥ ۖ وَخَشَعَتِ
ٱلْأَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ فَلَا تَسْمَعُ إِلَّا هَمْسًا ﴿108﴾ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا تَنفَعُ ٱلشَّفَٰعَةُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ وَرَضِىَ لَهُۥ قَوْلًا ﴿109﴾ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِهِۦ عِلْمًا
﴿110﴾ ۞ وَعَنَتِ ٱلْوُجُوهُ لِلْحَىِّ ٱلْقَيُّومِ ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ حَمَلَ ظُلْمًا ﴿111﴾ وَمَن يَعْمَلْ
مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَخَافُ ظُلْمًا وَلَا هَضْمًا ﴿112﴾

(105) They ask you about the mountains. Say, "My Lord shall completely remove them (106) "... leaving the earth as a barren plain..." (107) ". . . on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions. (108) On that day they will follow the caller before whom there will be no crookedness. Voices will be lowered before the Merciful and you will hear only the sound of footsteps. (109) On that day intercession will benefit only those whom the Merciful permits and whose speech He is pleased with. (110) He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they will be unable to encompass His knowledge. (111) All faces will bow before The Living, The Controller. The one who carried oppression will certainly be lost. (112) Whoever carried out good deeds as a believer will not have to fear any oppression, nor any shortage.

ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* THE EARTH WILL BE A BARREN PLAIN, VOICES WILL BE LOWERED, HEADS WILL BE BOWED BEFORE ALLĀH AND INTERCESSION WILL PROFIT ONLY THOSE WHO RECEIVE ALLĀH'S PERMISSION

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 231*) reports that a person from the Bani Thaqīf tribe asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "What will become of the mountains on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)'* In response to this, Allāh revealed the above verses saying, *"They ask you about the mountains. Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them..."* Allāh shall cause the mountains to be smashed to pieces.

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes and the mountains will be shattered to pieces and become like scattered dust."* [*Surah 56, verses 4-6*]

Surah Qāri'ah says, *"The mountains will become like carded wool."* [*Surah 101, verse 5*]

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to describe the earth on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* as *"Say, 'My Lord shall completely remove them (the*

mountains), leaving the earth as a barren plain, on which you will not see any protrusions, nor any depressions."

"On that day they will follow the caller before whom there will be no crookedness." People will be forced to follow only the caller towards the plains of reckoning. They will be unable to deviate to another path.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 264*) reports that *"the caller"* will be Israfīl عليه السلام. After blowing the trumpet for the second time, he will stand upon the rock at Baitul Muqaddas i.e. beneath the dome of the rock. From there he will make the following announcement, *"O decomposed bones! O shredded skins! O disjoined pieces of flesh! Come forth to the Merciful!"* Hearing this, all of mankind will proceed to the plains of reckoning.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" states that people will neither be able to turn to the left nor to the right. They will swiftly follow the caller.

"Voices will be lowered before the Merciful and you will hear only the sound of footsteps." All speech will be whispered on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, as was mentioned before *"They will whisper to each other saying, 'You have tarried only for ten days."* Even those people who spoke loudly, proudly and boisterously in the world will not be able to raise their voices.

"On that day intercession will benefit only those whom the Merciful permits and whose speech He is pleased with." Every person will not be able to intercede, and even the pious people who are worthy of interceding will not be able to do so until Allāh permits them.

Allāh says in the Ayatul Kursi, *"Who is there to intercede before Him without His permission?"* [*Surah 2, verse 255*]

No disbeliever will be able to intercede at all, nor will any believer *(Mu'min)* be allowed to intercede on behalf of a disbeliever. Those verses that negate intercession refer to intercession on behalf of the disbelievers e.g. Allāh says in Surah Mu'min, *"The oppressors shall have no friend, nor any intercessor who will be obeyed."* [*Surah 40, verse 18*]

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they will be unable to encompass His knowledge." "Ruhul Ma'āni" (*v. 16 p. 225*) says that another interpretation of this verses is that the creation can never perceive the true reality of Allāh with all His attributes.

"All faces will bow before The Living, The Controller." The creation will be helpless before Allāh, even those who were proud in this world.

"The one who carried oppression will certainly be lost." The greatest oppression is disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk)*. All other forms of oppression are also implied in this verse

On the other hand, *"Whoever carried out good deeds as a believer will not have to fear any oppression, nor any shortage."* In fact, the rewards for their deeds will be multiplied many fold.

Allāh says in verse 40 of Surah Nisā (*Surah 4*), *"Undoubtedly Allāh does not oppress even the weight of an atom. If it be a good deed, He shall multiply it and confer*

from His side a tremendous reward."

Says Allāh in Surah Jinn, *"Whoever believes in his Lord will not fear any stint or injustice."* [*Surah 72, verse 13*]

The condition attached to this verse is Belief *(Imān)*. The person who does not have Belief *(Imān)* will not receive any rewards for his deeds.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ ٱلْوَعِيدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿١١٣﴾ فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمَلِكُ ٱلْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِٱلْقُرْءَانِ مِن قَبْلِ أَن يُقْضَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُۥ وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِى عِلْمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

(113) Thus have We revealed it as an Arabic Qur'ān and expounded in it various warnings so that they fear or that it creates some type of understanding within them. (114) Exalted is Allāh, the Sovereign, the Truth. Do not be hasty with the Qur'ān before its revelation is completed to you. And say "O my Lord! Increase my knowledge."

ALLĀH SAYS THAT THE QUR'ĀN WAS REVEALED IN ARABIC, CONTAINING VARIOUS WARNINGS AND THAT THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم SHOULD PRAY FOR MORE KNOWLEDGE

Allāh begins the discussion of the Qur'ān by saying, *"Thus have We revealed it as an Arabic Qur'ān..."* Since the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Arabs and they understood the eloquence and miraculous nature of its text, they had no reason to reject it.

In addition to, this, Allāh says that He *"expounded in it various warnings so that they fear or* (if they do not inculcate piety *(Taqwa)* within themselves, then at least it is hoped) *that it creates some type of understanding within them."*

"Exalted is Allāh, the Sovereign, the Truth." It is therefore incumbent that a person believes in and worships Allāh. Whoever does not will be harming only himself.

Thereafter Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Do not be hasty with the Qur'ān before its revelation is completed to you."* When Jibrīl عليه السلام used to recite the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the later used to hastily repeat that words, fearing that he would forget them. In this way, he tired himself greatly. Allāh advises him not to do so, but to rather wait until Jibrīl عليه السلام has completed the recitation of that particular piece of revelation.

Allāh says in Surah Qiyāmah, *"Do not move your tongue in haste (to recite the Qur'ān). Its collection and recitation is Our responsibility. So once We have recited it, then repeat the recitation. Then the explanation is Our task."* [*Surah 75, verse 16-19*]

Allāh reduced the strain from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that this command was revealed because

sometimes it may occur that something is not heard properly while a person is reciting something else.

"And say 'O my Lord! Increase my knowledge.'" This includes further revelation of the Qur'ān as well as the other types of knowledge that Allāh can bestow on the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whereby Allāh's recognition is attained. A believer *(Mu'min)* should always aspire to increase his knowledge and never be satisfied with what he already knows.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A believer *(Mu'min)* is never satisfied with merely hearing something until he reaches Heaven *(Jannah)*." [*Mishkāt p.* 44]

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُۥ عَزْمًا ﴿115﴾ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا
لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ ﴿116﴾ فَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ إِنَّ
هَٰذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَىٰٓ ﴿117﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ
فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿118﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ ﴿119﴾ فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ
ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ﴿120﴾ فَأَكَلَا
مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۚ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ
رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿121﴾ ثُمَّ ٱجْتَبَٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ ﴿122﴾ قَالَ ٱهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًۢا ۖ
بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ
وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ ﴿123﴾

(115) Undoubtedly We commanded Ādam before, but he forgot and We did not find him to be resolute. (116) When We told the angels, "Prostrate before Ādam," so they all prostrated, except for Satan (Iblīs). He refused. (117) So We said, "O Ādam! Indeed he is an enemy to you and your wife, so he should never remove the two of you from Heaven (Jannah), causing you to be unfortunate." (118) "Without doubt you shall never be hungry nor naked here. (119) "You will never be thirsty here, nor will you be exposed to sunlight." (120) However, Satan (Shaytān) whispered to him saying, "O Ādam! Should I not show you the tree of eternity and a kingdom in which there is no weakness?" (121) So they both ate from there and their private parts became exposed to each other. They then started covering themselves with the leaves of Heaven (Jannah). Ādam disobeyed the command of his Lord and fell into error. (122) Thereafter his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance and made him steadfast on guidance. (123) Allāh said, "The two of you should go down from here and you (your progeny) will be enemies to each other. If there should ever come to you guidance from Me, then whoever will follow My guidance shall never go astray, nor shall he be unfortunate."

SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* ENTICES SAYYIDINA ĀDAM AND HAWWA عليهما السلام TO EAT FROM THE FORBIDDEN TREE, AFTER WHICH THEY ARE SENT DOWN TO EARTH

The detailed account of the story of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and *his* wife Sayyidah Hawwa عليه السلام was discussed in Surah Baqarah and Surah A'rāf. Thereafter, brief mention was also made about Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام in Surah Hijr and Surah Bani Isrā'īl.

In the first of the above verses, Allāh says that He *'commanded Ādam before* (not to eat from the tree)*, but he forgot and We did not find him to be resolute.'*

Thereafter Allāh relates the incident in detail. He says, *"When We told the angels, 'Prostrate before Ādam,' so they all prostrated, except for Iblīs. He refused."* Iblīs then argued that he was better than Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام because he was created from fire and Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was created from soil.

Allāh then warned Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام saying, *"O Ādam! Indeed he is an enemy to you and your wife, so he should never remove the two of you from Heaven (Jannah), causing you to be unfortunate."* i.e. if you are sent to earth, you will encounter all sorts of difficulties and adversities, unlike Heaven *(Jannah)*. As for Heaven *(Jannah)*, Allāh told him. *"Without doubt you shall never be hungry nor naked here. You will never be thirsty here, nor will you be exposed to sunlight."*

When Satan *(Shaytān)* was cursed and expelled from Heaven *(Jannah)*, he resolved to get Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام also out of Heaven *(Jannah)* and mislead his progeny on earth. Therefore satan *(Shaytān)* tempted them to eat from the forbidden tree. He told them, *"Your Lord has prohibited you from this tree so that you do not become two angels and so that the two of you do not become of the immortal. He took an oath before them saying, 'Most assuredly I am definitely an advisor to you!'"* [*Surah A'rāf (7), verses 20,21*]

Referring to the same, he also said, *"O Ādam! Should I not show you the tree of eternity and a kingdom in which there is no weakness?"*

As a result of his deceit and oaths, they succumbed. Allāh says, *"So they both ate from there and their private parts became exposed to each other. They then started covering themselves with the leaves of Heaven (Jannah). Ādam disobeyed the command of his Lord and fell into error."*

The Prophets عليهم السلام and the various divine scriptures have allied.

Allāh told them, *'Did I not forbid you from that tree and warned you that Satan (Shaytān) is your open enemy?"* *However, like true believers (Mu'minīn), they both realised their folly and submitted to Allāh saying, "O our Lord, we have oppressed our souls and if You do not forgive us and show mercy to us we will surely be of the losers."* [*Surah A'rāf (7) verses 22/23*]

Consequently, *"Thereafter his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance and made him steadfast on guidance."* Although Allāh forgave him, Allāh had already predestined that he should be a vicegerent on earth. Therefore, *"Allāh said, 'The two of you should go down from here and you (your progeny) will be enemies to each other."* One of the duties of the vicegerent is to maintain peace and harmony

between the warring factions.

Allāh addresses man saying, *"if there should ever came to you guidance from Me, then whoever will follow My guidance shall never go astray, nor shall he be unfortunate."*

The Holy Prophets عليهم السلام and the various divine scripture have already come. Even though there will be no more Prophets عليهم السلام after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the work of propagation (Da'wah and Tablīgh) and [Enjoing good and forbidding evil ***"Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar"***] still continue. The Qur'ān and the Ahādīth are still present before man. Following these man can still reach the elevated position of Heaven *(Jannah)* from where his great grandparents, Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليه السلام came from.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that Allāh will keep that person rightly guided in this world who follows the Qur'ān, and Allāh will save him from an evil reckoning on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*. This is because Allāh says, *"whoever will follow My guidance shall never go astray, nor shall he be unfortunate."*

A FEW IMPORTANT NOTES

Note: Explaining the verse, *"Undoubtedly We commanded Ādam before, but he forgot,"* the author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام forgot the command not to eat from the tree because he failed to attach importance to the instruction. It is for this reason that Allāh explained the point by saying, *"We did not find him to be resolute."* Therefore, if he had attached importance to the command and not allowed himself to succumb to forgetfulness, he would have been more resolute. In this way he could have averted the error.

Another interpretation of *"We did not find him to be resolute," is* that he was unable to resist the temptation of eating from the tree. "Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from other commentators that the verse means that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام never resolved to sin, but it happened in a moment of negligence.

Even the Prophets عليهم السلام are prone to err, because they are human. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I am but a human like yourselves. I also forget just like how you forget."* [*Mishkāt p.* 92]

The question then arises, that if it was merely an error, why was it necessary for him to seek forgiveness, and why was Allāh displeased? One reply to this question is that he was not taken to task because of the erroneous deed, but for the fact that he did not pay heed to the command, thereby allowing himself to forget. He could have made an undertaking with his wife that they should remind each other should the deed occur.

It once happened on a journey that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم went to sleep just before Fajr. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم appointed Sayyidina Bilāl رضي الله عنه to remain awake and to wake them for Fajr Salāh. However, he also fell asleep and they all missed the Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم, *"If any of you misses Salāh because*

of sleep or forgetting it, and he then awakens with a fright, he should perform it as if he were performing it in its proper time." [*Mishkāt p. 67*]

In this incident the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took the precaution of appointing Sayyidina Bilāl رضي الله عنه before going to sleep. However, Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام did not take any precautions to prevent the error. It is for this reason that he was reprimanded.

Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned [*v.11 p. 251*] that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was reprimanded purely for his error, although the average person would not be. The reason for this is that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was a person of high rank and such behaviour was thus not becoming of him.

It is not possible to doubt the innocence of the Prophets عليهم السلام from this incident because Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام did not sin, but he erred. Furthermore, the error occurred before his Prophethood was made evident and it occurred in the heavens, where no person is bound to the Shari'ah.

Many Scholars *(Ulama)* have mentioned that no Prophet can be guilty of disbeliefs and lying before announcing their Prophethood. Besides these two sins, the possibility exists that they can commit any other sin.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" writes that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was actually tricked by Satan *(Shaytān)* into thinking that he would remain in Heaven *(Jannah)* forever by eating from the tree. Conversely, he was then required to leave Heaven *(Jannah)*. [*v. 16 p. 274*]

Note: Allāh said, *"O Ādam! Indeed he is an enemy to you and your wife, so he should never remove the two of you from Heaven (Jannah), causing you to be unfortunate."* The end of this verse should actually read, *"..... causing the two of you to be unfortunate"* because both of them are being addressed. Scholars *(Ulama)* have deduced from this that it is the duty of the husband to earn. If he does not provide for his family, he will be held responsible and will have to face the consequences not her.

Note: Despite the multitude of bounties of Heaven *(Jannah)*, Allāh reminded Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليه السلام of only a few when He said, *"Without doubt you shall never be hungry nor naked here. You will never be thirsty here, nor will you be exposed to sunlight.*

Certain Scholars *(Ulama)* have deduced from this that that the basic necessities of a human are food, drink, clothing and shelter. The rest are all superfluous. Sayyidina Uthmān رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the child of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام has a right only to three things. These are (1) a house to live in, (2) sufficient clothing to conceal his private parts, and (3) a piece of bread and water. [*Tirmidhi*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned, *"The person who awakens in safe conditions, in good health and with enough food for the day, then it is as if he has gained the entire world."* [*Tirmidhi*]

Another necessity of life is marriage because it safeguards one's chastity and allows reproduction. It has not been mentioned in the above verse because

Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليهما السلام already had each other in wedlock.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, *"When a person marries, then half of his Belief (Imān) has been safeguarded. He should then fear Allāh for the other half."* [*Mishkāt p. 268*]

Some people who deemed themselves to be poor once came to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه. One of them asked him, "Are we not poor immigrants?" Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه asked, "Do you have a wife from whom you find comfort?" When he replied in the affirmative, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه asked, "Do you have a home to live in?" When he again replied in the affirmative, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه said, "You are then from the wealthy people." The person then added that he even had a slave. Thereupon Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه said, "You are then from the kings." [*Muslim*]

Note: Allāh is the Creator and Master of all creation. He chooses whom He wills to be Prophets عليهم السلام. If they commit any errors, He shall deal with them as He pleases. However, other people have no say in the matter. We have no right to say that Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was a sinner, nor should we talk about their mistakes. We may express only what Allāh has said in the Qur'ān, but should never quote other narrations that defile them in any way.

This is especially important when Allāh Himself has declared that He pardoned them, as He says above about Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, *"Thereafter his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance and made him steadfast on guidance.*

Allāh says in Surah Nūn about Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام, *"His Lord chose him and made him among the righteous."* [*Surah 68, verse 50*]

A person should consider how bad he will feel if another calls his grandfather a sinner. Worse still is attributing this name (sinner) to the father of mankind.

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِى فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ أَعْمَىٰ
﴿124﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِىٓ أَعْمَىٰ وَقَدْ كُنتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿125﴾ قَالَ كَذَٰلِكَ أَتَتْكَ ءَايَٰتُنَا
فَنَسِيتَهَا ۖ وَكَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْيَوْمَ تُنسَىٰ ﴿126﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى مَنْ أَسْرَفَ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنۢ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّهِۦ ۚ
وَلَعَذَابُ ٱلْءَاخِرَةِ أَشَدُّ وَأَبْقَىٰٓ ﴿127﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلْقُرُونِ يَمْشُونَ
فِى مَسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلنُّهَىٰ ﴿128﴾

(124) Whoever turns away from My advice shall surely have a narrowed life, and We shall raise him blind on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). (125) He will say, "O my Lord! Why have you raised me blind when I was indeed a seeing one?" (126) Allāh will say, "Thus did Our verses come to you, but you forgot them. In the same way you will be forgotten today." (127) Thus do We punish those who transgress the limits and do not believe in the verses of their Lord. The

punishment of the Hereafter is undoubtedly more severe and more lasting. (128) Were they not guided by the fact that We destroyed many nations before them, in whose localities they now walk? There are definitely signs in this for the intelligent ones.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO ARE AVERSE TO ALLĀH'S ADVICE AND DO NOT TAKE LESSON FROM THE RUINS OF PREVIOUS NATIONS

At the end of the incident of Sayyidina Ādam and Hawwa عليهما السلام, Allāh said, *"The two of you should go down from here and your people will be enemies to each other. If there should ever come to you guidance from Me, then whoever will follow My guidance shall never go astray, nor shall he be unfortunate."*

Now Allāh mentions the plight of those who fail to comply to Allāh's advice and reminders. Allāh says, *"Whoever turns away from My advice shall surely have a narrowed life..."* While some commentators have interpreted *"My advice"* as the Qur'ān, others say that it refers to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself. In essence, both are applicable because the Ahadīth of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم were all revelation from Allāh as well.

Ibn Kathīr has reported a hadith from the "Musnad of Bazzār" that *"a narrowed life"* refers to the punishment in the grave. He has also quoted other interpretations of *"a narrowed life"*. [*v. 3 p. 169*]

The general reference of the verse allows one to assume that *"a narrowed life"* denotes the life of this world. Although the disbelievers and sinners seem to be extremely affluent in this world, they do not have any peace and contentment in their lives. They are constantly plagued with worries and are continuously struck with calamities and disasters.

As far as their punishment in the Hereafter is concerned, Allāh says, *"..... and We shall raise him blind on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). He will say, 'O my Lord! Why have you raised me blind when I was indeed a seeing one?'"*

"Allāh will say, 'Thus did Our verses come to you (in the world), but you forgot them (i.e. turned a blind eye to them). In the same way you will be forgotten today.'" i.e. He will be left forever in Hell.

"Thus do We punish those who transgress the limits and do not believe in the verses of their Lord. The punishment of the Hereafter is undoubtedly more severe and more lasting." Every disbeliever will suffer this punishment.

"Were they not guided by the fact that We destroyed many nations before them, in whose localities they walk? There are definitely signs in this for the intelligent ones." The disbelievers heard about the various nations that were destroyed in the past because of their sins, and even visited the sites of their ruins. However, none of this had any effect on them.

Instead of repenting and accepting the truth, they seem totally indifferent. They rather enjoy themselves at these sites, eagerly snapping pictures and capturing the scene on video. They then return without gaining anything.

وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَكَانَ لِزَامًا وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ﴿129﴾ فَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَقُولُونَ
وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا ۖ وَمِنْ ءَانَآيِ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَأَطْرَافَ
النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضَىٰ ﴿130﴾ وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِۦٓ أَزْوَٰجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيَوٰةِ
الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿131﴾ وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَوٰةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا
نَسْـَٔلُكَ رِزْقًا ۖ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ ۗ وَالْعَٰقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ﴿132﴾

(129) If it were not for a decree that had already proceeded forth from your Lord, and an appointed term, punishment would have certainly come. (130) So patiently endure what they say and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before it sets. And glorify Him during the hours of the night and at the ends of the day so that you become happy. (131) Never strain your eyes towards the splendour of the worldly life and the wives that We have granted the disbelievers to enjoy, to test them. The provision of your Lord is best and more lasting. (132) Enjoin Salāh upon your family and yourself remain steadfast upon it. We do not ask provision from you, but We provide for you. The best result is for abstinence.

GLORIFY ALLĀH IN THE MORNING AND IN EVENING, DO NOT DESIRE THE PLEASURES GRANTED TO THE DISBELIEVERS AND ENJOIN SALĀH ON YOUR FAMILY

The polytheists refused to accept the preaching of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, insulted him and would make absurd statements when warned of Allāh's punishment. They would ask why punishment was not inflicted upon them immediately if they were wrong about their beliefs.

Allāh replies to this by saying, *"If it were not for a decree that had already proceeded forth from your Lord, and an appointed term, punishment would have certainly come."* Allāh will punish them when He decrees. Until then, He allows them grace.

Allāh then advises the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"So patiently endure what they say and glorify the praises of your Lord before the rising of the sun and before it sets. And glorify Him during the hours of the night and at the ends of the day so that you become happy."* By adopting patience and engaging in Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*, a person will attain contentment and will be freed from all anxieties.

Allāh says in the concluding verses of Surah Hijr, *"We know very well that your bosom is constrained by what they say. So glorify the praises of your Lord and be of the ones who prostrate. And worship your Lord until the certainty (death) comes to you."* [*Surah 15, verses 97-99*]

Commentators say that all five Salāh are mentioned in the above verse. They say that *"before the rising of the sun"* denotes Fajr, *"before it sets"* denotes Zuhr and Asr and *"the hours of the night"* refer to Maghrib and Isha. They say that Fajr and Asr are emphasised by the addition of the phrase *'it the ends of the day"*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم chose to live in poverty even though he sometimes gave people thousands of goats as gifts. The Sahabah رضي الله عنهم were also generally poor, whereas the disbelievers of their time were affluent. Allāh advises the believers *(Mu'minīn)* in the following verse, although the address appears to be directed towards the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Allāh says, *"Never strain your eyes towards the splendour of the worldly life and the wives that We have granted the disbelievers to enjoy, to test them."*

These worldly pleasures are fleeting and not worthy to be envied because *"The provision of your Lord is best and more lasting."* The rewards that Allāh will grant the righteous in Heaven *(Jannah)* are far more superior to anything that the disbelievers may ever hope to possess in this world. Even the worldly possessions that Allāh grants to the believers *(Mu'minīn)* are far superior to that which the disbelievers receive. They spend all they have in disbeliefs and sin, thereby earning themselves destruction in both worlds.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Never envy any bounty of a sinner because you never know what he will meet after death. Allāh shall delegate a murderer for him who will never die i.e. the Fire of Hell." [*Mishkāt p. 447*]

It is foolish to envy someone who will suffer forever in Hell. This world has no value in the sight of Allāh. Therefore the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If the world was worth even a mosquito's wing in Allāh's estimation, He would have never given the disbeliever a single drop of water to drink." [*Mishkāt p. 441*]

"Enjoin Salāh upon your family and yourself remain steadfast upon it." The verse is addressed to the entire Ummah. Salāh is the most important aspect of Islām after Belief *(Imān)* and the Shari'ah has accorded extreme prominence to it. A person can truly advise others to something only if he himself is particular about.

Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه wrote the following instruction to his governors: 'Indeed Salāh is the most important of your duties in my opinion. Whoever safeguards it and is particular about his Salāh, has safeguarded the rest of religion *(D'īn)*. Whoever destroys his Salāh will destroy the rest of his religion *(D'īn)* to a greater extent." [*Mu'atta of Mālik*]

People misconstrue present-day governments as being the same as the righteous Caliph *(Khilāfah)* of the first four Caliph *(Khalifas)*. This is extremely erroneous because the primary objective of the four righteous khalifas was to make people practise Dīn and to safeguard Islām. Together with this, they never left a stone unturned to see to the welfare of people in all other regards as well.

Nowadays the leaders concern themselves only with safeguarding their posts. They have no regard for the religion *(D'īn)* themselves, let alone being concerned with the spiritual welfare of the masses. They wish to please the people irrespective of their sins and even issue licenses for them to sin.

"We do not ask provision from you, but We provide for you." Allāh has not burdened man with the task of providing sustenance for himself. He has to merely engage in some Lawful *(Halāl)* occupation and continue to worship and obey Allāh. Allāh will ensure that he survives. A person should never compromise on the commands of Allāh to sustain himself. Allāh provides for the

one who abstains from Unlawful *(Harām)* financial sources just as well as He provides for those people who adopt every Unlawful *(Harām)* avenue. In fact, Allāh sustains all of His creation.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم always enjoined Salāh upon his household when they encountered any problems. He would then recite to them the verse, "Enjoin Salāh upon your family and yourself remain steadfast upon it." [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"*]

It was the practice of Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه to perform Salāh during the night and then awaken his household during the last portion of the night. He would tell them, "Perform Salāh! "Perform Salāh!" Then he would also recite the above verse to them. [*Mu'atta of Mālik*]

"The best result is for abstinence." The word *"abstinence"* here refers to piety *(Taqwa),* which entails carrying out all the commands of Allāh and refraining from everything the He has prohibited.

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا يَأْتِينَا بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ ۚ أَوَلَمْ تَأْتِهِم بَيِّنَةُ مَا فِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ ﴿133﴾ وَلَوْ أَنَّا أَهْلَكْنَاهُم بِعَذَابٍ مِّن قَبْلِهِ لَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَوْلَا أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُولًا فَنَتَّبِعَ آيَاتِكَ مِن قَبْلِ أَن نَّذِلَّ وَنَخْزَىٰ ﴿134﴾ قُلْ كُلٌّ مُّتَرَبِّصٌ فَتَرَبَّصُوا ۖ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ أَصْحَابُ الصِّرَاطِ السَّوِيِّ وَمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ ﴿135﴾

(133) They say, "Why does he not bring us a sign from his Lord?" Has the clear proof from the previous scriptures not reached them? (134) If We had to destroy them with a punishment from before, they would have said, "O our Lord! Why did You not send a messenger to us so that we could have followed Your signs before being disgraced and humiliated?" (135) Say, "Everyone is waiting, so you also wait. Soon you shall come to learn who are the people of the straight path and who are rightly guided."

IF ALLĀH DESTROYS A NATION AFTER THE TRUTH WAS MADE APPARENT TO THEM, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THAT THEY WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم IF THEY WERE GIVEN THE CHANCE

In the first of these concluding verses of Surah TāHā, Allāh says about the Quraysh, *"They say, 'Why does he* [*the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم] *not bring us a sign from his Lord?"* i.e. a miracle to prove his apostleship. They constantly demanded that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم show them miracles that they desired to see.

They did not say these things with the intention of believing after witnessing the miracle, but did so because of their obstinacy. If they were sincere, they would have believed in the miraculous Qur'ān and the other miracles that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم showed to them. Therefore Allāh says, *"Has the clear proof* (the Qur'ān) *from the previous scriptures* (the Torah and Injīl) *not reached*

them?"

"If We had to destroy them with a punishment from before, they would have said, 'O our Lord! Why did You not send a messenger to us so that we could have followed Your signs before being disgraced and humiliated (by being Disbelievers)?" Allāh always sends the Prophets عليهم السلام to people so that they never have the opportunity of saying this.

Allāh says in Surah Isrā, *"We shall never punish (any nation) until We send a messenger."* Allāh also says in Surah Fātir, *"Verily We have sent you [O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with the truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner. A warner passed in every nation."* [*Surah 35, verse 24*]

Allāh then instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *"Say, 'Everyone is waiting (to see the outcome of this world and the Hereafter), so you also wait. Soon you shall come to learn who are the people of the straight path and who are rightly guided."* People will realise the facts only after death, when it will be too late. Therefore, they should all prepare beforehand.

CONCLUSION

It was generally the poor people who accepted Islām during the early stages and they were always afraid to make their belief publicly because of the intensity of persecutions that they suffered. One of these people was the sister of Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه, by the name of Fātimā رضي الله عنها, and her husband, Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Zaid رضي الله عنه [who was one of the ten people who were collectively given the tidings of entry into Heaven *(Jannah)* by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم]. The two of them used to receive secret lessons in Qur'ān from Sayyidina Khabbāb Bin Aratt رضي الله عنه.

It once occurred that Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه [while he was still a Polytheist] took his sword and marched through Makkah with the intention of assassinating the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم En route he met Sayyidina Nu'aym bin Abdullah رضي الله عنه, who asked him where he was headed. Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه replied, "Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has invented a new religion *(D'īn)*, divided the Quraysh, made them look foolish, brought disrepute to their religion *(D'īn)*, and spoken ill of their gods. I am on my way to slay the one who brings a new religion *(D'īn)*.

Sayyidina Nu'aym رضي الله عنه told him, *"Do you not realise that the Banu Abd Manāf tribe will never leave you alive if you kill Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم? Why don't you see to your family first?"*

When Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه asked him what he meant, he replied, *"Your sister Fātimā and your brother-in-law cum cousin Sa'īd bin Zaid have also accepted Islām and follow Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. You should rather see to them first."*

Upon hearing this, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه stormed to his sister's house, where Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه was busy teaching them Surah TāHā. Hearing the footsteps of Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه hid away. In the meantime, Sayyidina Fātimā رضي الله عنها hid the leaves of the Qur'ān. However, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه had already heard something and asked his sister what it was.

When she and her husband told him that it was nothing, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه bellowed, "How could it be nothing? I know that the two of you have accepted the religion *(D'īn)* of Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!" Saying this, he grabbed Sayyidina Sa'īd رضي الله عنه to beat him up. When Sayyidah Fātimā رضي الله عنها intervened to save her husband, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه beat her so severely that her face bled.

The couple then told him, *"We have accepted Islām. You may do as you please."* When Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه saw the bleeding face of his sister, he became ashamed of himself and said, *"Bring me the leaves that you were reciting. I would like to see what Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has brought."*

His sister told him that she did not trust him because he was likely to tear up the leaves. He then swore by his gods that he would merely read them and then return them to her. Realising that this may be the perfect opportunity for her brother to accept Islām, Sayyidah Fātimā رضي الله عنها told him that he could not yet touch the leaves because he was impure. He then had a bath, after which she handed the leaves over to him.

When he recited the first few verses of Surah TāHā, Sayyidina' Umar رضي الله عنه exclaimed, *"This is indeed a beautiful composition and an honourable thing!"* Hearing this, Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه emerged from his hiding place and said, *"O Umar! By Allāh! I think that Allāh has accepted you by virtue of the supplication (du'ā) of His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. I heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pray last night. He said, 'O Allāh! Strengthen Islām with Abul Hikam bin Hishām (Abu Jahl) or with Umar bin Khattāb.' I think that the supplication (du'ā) was in your favour."*

Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه asked Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه, *"Tell me where is* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. *I wish to accept Islām at his hands."* Sayyidina Khabbāb رضي الله عنه told him that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was in a house near mount Safa with other people.

When Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه knocked at the door, some Sahabah رضي الله عنهم said, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Umar is here with a sword in his hand!" Sayyidina Hamzah رضي الله عنه [Who was the uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] said, *"Call him in. If his intentions are good, we shall be in attendance to him. If his intentions are evil, then we will kill him with his own sword."*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted him to enter and, when he came in, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم pulled him by his shawl and said, "O son of Khattāb! How have you arrived? It seems as if you will refrain from disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk)* only when some calamity afflicts you.

Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه replied, "I have come to declare my belief in Allāh, His Holy Prophet and everything that has come from Allāh." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم exclaimed in a loud voice, ***"Allāhu Akbar!"*** All present realised that Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه had accepted Islām and they were pleased that they would be safe from the oppression of the disbelievers with Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Hamzah رضي الله عنه on their side. [*"Al Bidāya wan Nihaayah" v. 3 p. 79-81*]

PART SEVENTEEN

سورة الانبياء

Makkan	Surah Al-Anbiya	Verses 112

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا يَأْتِيهِم مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن
رَّبِّهِم مُّحْدَثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿٢﴾ لَاهِيَةً قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَسَرُّوا النَّجْوَى الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا هَلْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ أَفَتَأْتُونَ السِّحْرَ وَأَنتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾
قَالَ رَبِّي يَعْلَمُ الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٤﴾ بَلْ قَالُوا
أَضْغَاثُ أَحْلَامٍ بَلِ افْتَرَاهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا بِآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأَوَّلُونَ
﴿٥﴾ مَا آمَنَتْ قَبْلَهُم مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَفَهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا
قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧﴾
وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَّا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوا خَالِدِينَ ﴿٨﴾ ثُمَّ صَدَقْنَاهُمُ
الْوَعْدَ فَأَنجَيْنَاهُمْ وَمَن نَّشَاءُ وَأَهْلَكْنَا الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٩﴾ لَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ
كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Peoples' reckoning has drawn near, yet they are averse in negligence. (2) They listen in jest to any new advice that comes to them from their Lord....... (3) while their hearts are heedless. The oppressors secretly convene Saying. "He is but a human like yourselves. Do you succumb to magic while you see it?" (4) He said, "My Lord knows the speech in the heavens and the earth, and He is All Hearing, All Knowing. (5) However, they say, 'These are confused dreams. Nay, he has concocted it! Nay, he is a poet! He should bring us a sign like the ones

sent with the previous people." (6) None of the towns that We destroyed before them had believed. Will these people now believe? (7) Before them We have sent only men to whom We have sent revelation, so ask those who have knowledge if you do not possess any knowledge. (8) We have not made them bodies that do not eat food, neither did they live forever. (9) Then We made true the promise to them, rescued them, and destroyed those who transgressed the limits. (10) We have certainly revealed to you people a Book which contains advice to you. Will you still not understand?

THE REPLY TO THE STUBBORN STATEMENTS OF THE DISBELIEVERS

Until the end of verse 50, Surah Anbiya continues with the arguments of the disbelievers and replies to them. Thereafter, Allāh relates the accounts of many Prophets عليهم السلام until the end of the Surah.

Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"Peoples' reckoning (Qiyāmah) has drawn near, yet they are averse in negligence."* They are in this condition of heedlessness because they do not believe in the day of Judgement. Instead of accepting what is being revealed, *"They listen in jest to any new advice that comes to them from their Lord while their hearts are heedless."*

In addition to this, they deny the Holy Prophets of Allāh عليهم السلام and *"secretly convene saying, 'He is but a human like yourselves. Do you succumb to magic while you see it?"'* Here they refer to the miracles of the Prophets عليهم السلام.

In reply, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم says, *'My Lord knows the speech in the heavens and the earth, and He is All Hearing, All Knowing."* Allāh will punish these disbelievers for their deeds and denial.

About the Qur'ān, they say, *"These are confused dreams.* (Furthermore, they made the accusations that) *Nay, he has concocted it! Nay, he is a poet!"*

They also said, *"He should bring us a sign like the ones sent with the previous people."* They refuse to accept even the greatest miracle (the Qur'ān), yet they ask for more. Although they realise that they cannot even match a single Surah of the Qur'ān, yet they refute the Qur'ān!

Allāh replies by saying that their demands are futile because *"None of the towns that We destroyed before them had believed* (when they were granted the miracles they requested). *Will these people now believe?"* If they do not believe after being shown the miracles, they will be destroyed, like the previous nations. However, since Allāh has not yet decreed their punishment, they will not be shown what they ask for.

In reply to the age-old argument that humans cannot be the Holy Prophets, Allāh says, *"Before them We have sent only men to whom We have sent revelation, so ask those who have knowledge if you do not possess any knowledge."* "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets this verse to mean that the ignorant people should enquire from the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* about the previous Prophets عليهم السلام, concerning whom they are well aware.

Allāh tells the polytheists that they should ask the People of the Book

whether the Prophets عليهم السلام were men or angels and how to ascertain the truth of a person's claim to the Prophethood. They learnt from these very people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* how to say, *"He should bring us a sign like the ones sent with the previous people."* Therefore, they should also learn the other facts from them. When they learn from them that the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were all humans, they will not have any objections to the status of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh says further about the Prophets عليهم السلام, *"We have not made them bodies that do not eat food, neither did they live forever."*

Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"All the messengers that We sent before you used to eat food and walk in the market places."* [*Surah 25, verse 20*]

Allāh continues to speak about the Prophets عليهم السلام when He says, *"Then We made true the promise* (of assistance) *to them, rescued them* (from punishment), *and destroyed those who transgressed the limits."*

Allāh then says, *"We have certainly revealed to you people a Book which contains advice to you. Will you still not understand?"* Commentators have mentioned that the fact that the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic gave credence and honour to the Arabs and by following the Qur'ān, Allāh Ta'āla granted them sovereignty over all other nations.

Note: *"ask those who have knowledge if you do not possess any knowledge."* This verse has also passed in Surah Nahl. Scholars *(Ulama)* say that its purport is general and that people who do not have knowledge of the religion *(D'īn)* should consult those who posses this knowledge. Ignorance of any law is no excuse. It is tragic indeed that some people choose to remain ignorant of the religion *(D'īn)* and do not even care to educate their children.

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا ءَاخَرِينَ (11) فَلَمَّآ
أَحَسُّوا۟ بَأْسَنَآ إِذَا هُم مِّنْهَا يَرْكُضُونَ (12) لَا تَرْكُضُوا۟ وَٱرْجِعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ مَآ أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ
وَمَسَٰكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْـَٔلُونَ (13) قَالُوا۟ يَٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ (14) فَمَا زَالَت تِّلْكَ
دَعْوَىٰهُمْ حَتَّىٰ جَعَلْنَٰهُمْ حَصِيدًا خَٰمِدِينَ (15)

(11) How many were the towns that We annihilated, who were oppressive, and We then created another nation after them. (12) When they sensed Our punishment, they suddenly began to flee from the town. (13) "Do not flee, but return to the things that gave you pleasure and to your homes so that you may be questioned." (14) They said, "Woe betide us.' We were oppressors indeed!" (15) This remained their call until We made them like reaped corn, totally extinguished.

THE PLIGHT OF DESTROYED NATIONS

Allāh depicts the scene of a town being destroyed so that people can learn

from it. Allāh's says, *"How many were the towns that We annihilated, who were oppressive* (by perpetrating disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk), and We then created another nation after them.*

"When they sensed Our punishment, they suddenly began to flee from the town. (It was then told to them either by angels or the believers (Mu'minīn)) 'Do not flee, but return to the things that gave you pleasure and to your homes so that you may be questioned (about the result of your pleasant lives)." When Allāh's punishment came, they forgot all about their items of leisure and the palaces that they built and boasted about. Nothing could save them from the punishment.

When the punishment closed in on them, *"They said, 'Woe betide us! We were oppressors indeed!' This remained their call until We made them like reaped corn, totally extinguished."* After the punishment, their corpses lay in heaps like stacked corn after harvesting. Their pomp and glory was also extinguished like a raging fire that is suddenly put out.

Although the verses do not mention which town is being described, some commentators say that it was Hadhramaut, a place in Yemen. The people killed a the Holy Prophet who was sent to them, after which Allāh made the tyrant Bakht Nasar (Nabuchadnezzar) plunder their town, killing many and capturing the others. In fear and terror, they fled the town for their lives. *["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 240]*

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا ٱلسَّمَآءَ وَٱلْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَـٰعِبِينَ ﴿16﴾ لَوْ أَرَدْنَآ أَن نَّتَّخِذَ لَهْوًا لَّٱتَّخَذْنَـٰهُ مِن لَّدُنَّآ إِن كُنَّا فَـٰعِلِينَ ﴿17﴾ بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِٱلْحَقِّ عَلَى ٱلْبَـٰطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُۥ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ ۚ وَلَكُمُ ٱلْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ ﴿18﴾ وَلَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَنْ عِندَهُۥ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِۦ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ ﴿19﴾ يُسَبِّحُونَ ٱلَّيْلَ وَٱلنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ ﴿20﴾

(16) We have not created the heavens and the earth in futility. (17) If We intended to create a toy, We would have done so from Our side if We were to really do so. (18) However, We hurl truth at falsehood, shattering its head, after which it suddenly disappears. Woe betide you for what you concoct. (19) To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. Those who are with Him are not ashamed to worship Him, nor do they tire. (20) They glorify Him night and day without being lax.

CONFIRMATION OF THE TRUTH AND THE ANNIHILATION OF FALSEHOOD

Allāh begins by saying, *"We have not created the heavens and the earth in futility."* Allāh created everything with great wisdom, so that people may recognise His power and grandeur by it. Therefore Allāh says, *"If We intended to create a toy* (i.e. something for futility), *We would have done so from Our side if We*

were to really do so." i.e. If the purpose were only recreation and sport, Allāh could have rather created something else instead of the universe to amuse Himself with. Of course, Allāh does not require such a futile thing like recreation.

Truth and falsehood have always been at loggerheads with each other because one is the antithesis of the other. However, the truth always prevails and remains dominant. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"However, We hurl truth at falsehood, shattering its head, after which it suddenly disappears. Woe betide you for what you concoct (about Allāh having partners)."*

"To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. Those who are with Him (the angels) are not ashamed to worship Him, nor do they tire. They glorify Him night and day without being lax." The angels are constantly engaged in Allāh's worship and never stop worshipping Him.

أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَةً مِّنَ ٱلْأَرْضِ هُمْ يُنشِرُونَ ﴿21﴾ لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَآ ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا ٱللَّهُ
لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحَـٰنَ ٱللَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿22﴾ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُونَ
﴿23﴾ أَمِ ٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً ۖ قُلْ هَاتُوا۟ بُرْهَـٰنَكُمْ ۖ هَـٰذَا ذِكْرُ مَن مَّعِىَ وَذِكْرُ مَن قَبْلِى ۗ
بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٱلْحَقَّ ۖ فَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿24﴾ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ
إِلَّا نُوحِىٓ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا۠ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿25﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ ٱتَّخَذَ ٱلرَّحْمَـٰنُ وَلَدًا ۗ سُبْحَـٰنَهُۥ ۚ
بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿26﴾ لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُۥ بِٱلْقَوْلِ وَهُم بِأَمْرِهِۦ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿27﴾
يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ٱرْتَضَىٰ وَهُم مِّنْ خَشْيَتِهِۦ
مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿28﴾ ۞ وَمَن يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّىٓ إِلَـٰهٌ مِّن دُونِهِۦ فَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ
كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿29﴾

(21) Or have they chosen gods from the earth who can resurrect? (22) If there were other deities besides Allāh in the heavens and the earth, the system of both would be in chaos. Allāh, the Lord of the Arsh (throne), is Pure from what they ascribe. (23) He will not be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned. (24) Or have they chosen other deities besides Him? Say, "Produce your proof!" This is a reminder of those with me, and of those before me. But most of them do not know the truth, because of which they are averse." (25) We sent revelation to every messenger before you that, "Without doubt there is no deity besides Me, so worship Me only." (26) They say, "the Merciful has taken a son." He is Pure! They are but honourable slaves. (27) They do not speak ahead of Him and duly carry out His orders. (28) He knows what is before them and what is behind them and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him. (29) Whoever of them has to say, "I am a deity besides Him," then We shall punish him in Hell. Thus do We punish the oppressors.

THE PROOFS OF ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* AND THE LOYALTY OF THE ANGELS

Refuting the beliefs of the polytheists, Allāh says, *"Or* (after exhaustive searches) *have they chosen gods from the earth who can resurrect?"* It is obvious that the idols that they have themselves carved from stone and wood cannot possibly resurrect anything.

Allāh says regarding their false gods in Surah Nahl, *"They are dead without any life. They do not even know when they will be raised."* [*Surah 16, verse 21*]

"If there were other deities besides Allāh in the heavens and the earth, the system of both would be in chaos." It is apparent that if there were many gods, each would want to do things his way. These conflicting opinions would certainly impact upon the functioning of the universe, causing it to be cast in turmoil. However, it is clear to all that the universe is functioning perfectly. Therefore, it follows that there is only One Allāh controlling everything.

Allāh says in Surah Mu'min, *"Allāh has not taken any son, nor are there any deities with Him. If there were, then every deity would have separated his creation and some would overpower the others. Allāh is Pure from the partners that they ascribe to Him."* [*Surah 23, verse 91*]

Declaring His independence from all that the polytheists say, Allāh announces, *"Allāh, the Lord of the throne, is Pure from what they ascribe."*

"He will not be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned." Allāh has the unrestricted authority to do as He pleases because everything belongs to Him. However, man is answerable to Allāh for everything that he does and believes. He is answerable in this world, as well as in the Hereafter.

"Or have they chosen other deities besides Him? Say, 'Produce you proof'" There can be no proof to justify polytheism *(shirk)*. It is abominable logically and from a religious point of view. The Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures have all attested to its evil and forbidden it.

"This (Qur'ān) is a reminder of those with me, and of those before me." The previous scriptures also verified the evil of polytheism *(shirk)*. However, *"most of them do not know the truth, because of which they are averse."*

"We sent revelation to every messenger before you that, 'Without doubt there is no deity besides Me, so worship Me only." This verse refutes the belief of the Christians, who claim that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh. Once it has been established that all the Prophets عليهم السلام received the same message of Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, it is sheer foolishness to attribute beliefs of polytheism *(shirk)* to these Prophets عليهم السلام.

"They say, 'the Merciful has taken a son.' He is Pure! They (the angels) *are but honourable slaves."* In this verse Allāh refutes that claim of the polytheists, who said that the angels are Allāh's daughters. Allāh describes the loyalty of worship that the angels portray when he says, *"They do not speak ahead of Him and duly carry out His orders. He knows what is before them and what is behind them and only the one with whom He is pleased will be able to intercede. They tremble with fear for Him. Whoever of them has to say, 'I am a deity besides Him,' then We shall punish him in*

Hell. Thus do We punish the oppressors."

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۖ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ
الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ ۖ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ
وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا فِجَاجًا سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣١﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا ۖ
وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ فِي
فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

(30) Do the disbelievers not see that the skies and the earth were once closed, then We opened them? And We created every living thing from water. Will they still not believe? (31) We have placed ballast upon the earth so that it does not shake with them, and We have made wide roads on earth so that they be guided. (32) And We have made the sky a protected roof, yet they are averse to Our signs. (33) It is Allāh Who created the night, the day, the sun and the moon, each swimming in its own orbit.

FURTHER PROOFS OF ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* AND THE CREATION OF THE EARTH, SKY, SUN AND MOON

In the above verses, Allāh describes His power of creation and presents some great feats of His creation to illustrate the point. Allāh says, *"Do the disbelievers not see that the skies and the earth were once closed, then We opened them?"* Initially no rain fell from the sky, nor did any vegetation grow on the earth. However, when Allāh sends the rains, the earth springs to life with various plants and vegetation.

This should serve a sign to the disbelievers and the polytheists, who deny Allāh's existence and who ascribe partners to Him.

'And We created every living thing from water. Will they still not believe?" Every living thing originated from the rains, either directly or indirectly. Herein also is a sign for the disbelievers, but they still do not believe.

Furthermore, Allāh says, *"We have placed ballast upon the earth so that it does not shake with them..."* To give stability to the earth, Allāh has placed mountains on it. Allāh says in Surah Nāzi'āt, *"Allāh stationed the mountains on earth."* [*Surah 79, verse 32*]

Allāh says in Surah Wal Mursalāt, *"We have placed towering mountains on earth."* [*Surah 77, verse 27*]

The mountains extend towards the sky and are also embedded deep within the ground. They serve the purpose of stabilising the earth, thus preventing it from shaking. Allāh says in Surah Naba, *"Have We not made the earth a bed and the mountains as pegs."* However, if Allāh wills, He can cause parts of the earth to shudder with earthquakes together with the mountains.

Allāh continues by saying that He *"made wide roads on earth so that they be guided."* Allāh has made causeways and paths through the lands and even in the mountains. These facilitate easy journeys for people.

Allāh says in Surah Nūh, *"Allāh has made the earth a carpet for you so that you may traverse on its broad roads."* [*Surah 71, verse 19, 20*]

Allāh then describes the sky when He says, *'And We have made the sky a protected roof.."* Allāh has protected the sky from falling and cracking. It will be rent asunder only on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

Allāh has also protected the skies from the infiltration of the Satan *(Shayātīn).* Allāh says in verses 17 and 18 of Surah Hijr (*Surah 15*), *"And We have safeguarded it (the sky) from every accursed Satan (Shaytān). Except the one who steals a hearing. A clear flame pursues him."*

"...yet they are averse to Our signs." Despite witnessing the numerous manifestations of Allāh's power, the disbelievers refuse to believe in Him.

"It is Allāh Who created the night, the day, the sun and the moon, each swimming in its own orbit." Witnessing these great creations of Allāh, the sensible person cannot help but recognise Allāh's power and glory. The sun and the moon are travelling in their orbits with the fluidity and speed of something swimming in water.

Allāh says in Surah Yāsīn, *"It is not possible for the sun to catch up with the moon, nor is it possible for the night to precede the day. They all rotate within their orbits."* [*Surah 36, verse 40*]

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ ۖ أَفَإِين مِّتَّ فَهُمُ الْخَالِدُونَ (34) كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۖ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ (35) وَإِذَا رَآكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِن يَتَّخِذُونَكَ إِلَّا هُزُوًا أَهَٰذَا الَّذِي يَذْكُرُ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَهُم بِذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ (36) خُلِقَ الْإِنسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ ۚ سَأُورِيكُمْ آيَاتِي فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ (37) وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (38) لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا حِينَ لَا يَكُفُّونَ عَن وُجُوهِهِمُ النَّارَ وَلَا عَن ظُهُورِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ (39) بَلْ تَأْتِيهِم بَغْتَةً فَتَبْهَتُهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ (40) وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ (41)

(34) We have not prescribed eternal life for any human before you. If you pass away, will they live forever? (35) Every soul shall taste death. We test you well with good and bad conditions and you will return to Us. (36) When the

Consequently, the polytheists of Makkah suffered in the battle of Badr, when many of their leaders were killed and others were captured.

"They say, 'When will the promise come to pass if you are truthful?"' They often repeated this question because they never believed in Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. In reply to this question, Allāh says, *"If only the disbelievers knew the time when they will neither be able to avert the Fire from their faces, nor from their backs. They will also not be helped. However, it (the Fire) will come to them suddenly, totally confounding them. Then they will neither be able to thwart it off, nor will they be granted any respite."* If they realised this, they would never speak the way they do and would rather become Muslims, thereby saving themselves from this terrible torment.

"Undoubtedly, the messengers before you were also ridiculed, so those who ridiculed them were engulfed by their own ridicule." Allāh consoles the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this verse by reminding him that the previous nations were all punished because they ridiculed the Prophets عليهم السلام. In the same way, those who ridiculed and derided the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will also soon suffer the same fate.

قُلْ مَنْ يَكْلَؤُكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَٰنِ ۗ بَلْ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ (42) أَمْ لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ تَمْنَعُهُمْ مِنْ دُونِنَا ۚ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ مِنَّا يُصْحَبُونَ (43) بَلْ مَتَّعْنَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ وَآبَاءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ طَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ ۗ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا ۚ أَفَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ (44) قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُنْذِرُكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ ۚ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ الصُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا مَا يُنْذَرُونَ (45) وَلَئِنْ مَسَّتْهُمْ نَفْحَةٌ مِنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ (46)

(42) Say, "Who can protect you from the Merciful each day and night?" However, they are averse to the Oneness of their Lord. (43) Or do they have deities that will protect them from Us? They cannot even help themselves, nor will anyone align with them against Us. (44) Nonetheless, We granted ease to them and their forefathers until a long period passed by them. Do they not see that We gradually diminish the earth from its ends? Will they be victorious? (45) Say, "I warn you only with revelation. The deaf cannot hear the call when they are warned." (46) Undoubtedly if a puff of your Lord's punishment has to afflict them they will certainly say, "May destruction overtake us! We were oppressors indeed!"

NONE CAN PROTECT FROM ALLĀH'S PUNISHMENT, AND PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE BECAUSE OF THE COMFORTS THAT THEY HAVE BEEN GRANTED

"Say, 'Who can protect you from the Merciful each day and night?" The

disbelievers also realise that none can rescue them from Allāh's punishment once it strikes. *"However* (despite this realisation), *they are averse to the Oneness of their Lord."*

Allāh goes on further to say, *"Or do they have deities that will protect them from Us? (This is not possible because) They cannot even help themselves, nor will anyone align with them against Us."*

"Nonetheless, We granted ease to them and their forefathers until a long period passed by them." As their generations passed by, living in ease and comfort, they succumbed to the pleasures of this type of life and never responded to the preaching of the Prophets عليهم السلام. They were also so engrossed in their own pleasures, that they failed to heed the constant changes and revolutions that took place around them. They then opposed the Prophets عليهم السلام and their religion's *(D'īn's)*

"Do they not see that We gradually diminish the earth from its ends?" i.e. Allāh gradually allows the Muslims to gain control of the earth. Despite this, do the disbelievers still think that they will gain victory, therefore, Allāh asks, *"Will they be victorious?"*

"Say, 'I warn you only with revelation. (However, the disbelievers play deaf, so) *The deaf cannot hear the call when they are warned."* They refuse to heed the repeated warnings of Allāh' s punishment.

"Undoubtedly if a puff of your Lord's punishment has to afflict them they will certainly say, 'May destruction overtake us! We were oppressors indeed!'" Then it will be too late for regrets. They should take heed in this world and accept Islām.

وَنَضَعُ ٱلْمَوَٰزِينَ ٱلْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَٰسِبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

(47) On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), We will erect the scales of justice and no soul will be oppressed in the least. Even if a deed is equal to the weight, of a mustard seed, We shall present it. We suffice as Reckoners.

THE SCALES OF JUSTICE WILL BE ERECTED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND NONE WILL BE OPPRESSED

Allāh reminds man of the scene of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* when He says, *"On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), We will erect the scales of justice and no soul will be oppressed in the least. Even if a deed is equal to the weight of a mustard seed, We shall present it."*

Allāh says in Surah Nisā, *"Undoubtedly Allāh does not even oppress the weight of an atom. If it be a good deed, He shall multiply it and confer from His side a tremendous reward."* [*Surah 4, verse 40*]

Says Allāh in Surah Zilzāl, *"Whoever does an iota 's weight of good will see it and whoever does an iota 's weight of evil will see it."* [*Surah 99, verse 7, 8*]

Allāh then says, *"We suffice as Reckoners."* After Allāh reckons with people,

there will be no need for any other to repeat the process. None can pass judgement after Allāh.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that a person once came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and, after being seated asked, *"I have few slaves who lie to me, deceive me and disobey me. I scold them and sometimes even hit them. What will become of us?"*

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), their lies, deceit and disobedience will be reckoned against the punishment that you mete out to them. If the two are found to be equal, then the matter will be resolved. Neither will you receive anything from them, nor will you be punished. If your punishment is found to be less than their misdeeds, you will receive compensation for it. However, if your punishment exceeds the extent of their misdeeds, then they will be compensated at your expense."*

Hearing this, the person moved away, weeping and wailing. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then told him, "Did you not read in Allāh's Book, *"On the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah), We will erect the scales of justice and no soul will be oppressed in the least?"*

The person then told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "O The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم By Allāh! I see nothing better for them and for me except that I should be separated from them. I call you to witness that I have freed all of them." [*Mishkāt p. 484*]

Because the above verse mentions *"scales"* (in the plural form), many commentators maintain that there will be several scales on the Day of Judgement. However, the majority of Islāmic scholars say that there will be only one scale, which will be large enough for everyone.

Sayyidina Salmān Fārsi رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the scale to be used on the Day of Judgement will be so large that the heavens and the earth can be accommodated in it. When it will be erected, the angels will ask Allāh for whom will this be used. Allāh will reply, *"For those of My bondsmen whom I desire."* [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 4 p. 425*]

The details regarding the method of weighing were discussed in the commentary of verses 8 and 9 of Surah A'rāf.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَآءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿48﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلْغَيْبِ وَهُم مِّنَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿49﴾ وَهَٰذَا ذِكْرٌ مُّبَارَكٌ أَنزَلْنَٰهُ أَفَأَنتُمْ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ ﴿50﴾

(48) Without doubt, We have granted Mūsa and Harūn the Decider, a light, and a reminder to the abstinent ones. (49) Those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and they are fearful of Judgment day (Qiyāmah). (50) This is a blessed advice that We have revealed. Will you then reject it?

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE QUR'ĀN AND THE TORAH

Allāh says about the Torah, *"Without doubt, We have granted Mūsa and Harūn the Decider* (between truth and falsehood), *a light (for the heart), and a reminder to the abstinent ones."* Although the Torah was revealed for all people, it was especially beneficial for the *"abstinent ones."* Allāh then describes who the *"abstinent ones"* are. Besides being people who abstain from all sin, Allāh says that they are *"Those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and they are fearful of Judgment day (Qiyāmah)."* These were those people who truly followed the teachings of the Torah.

Certain commentators have mentioned that *"the Decider"* refers to the assistance that Allāh rendered to Sayyidina Mūsa and Harūn عليه السلام. They say further that *"a light and a reminder"* refer to the Torah.

Thereafter, Allāh speaks of the Qur'ān. He says, *"This is a blessed advice that We have revealed. Will you then reject it?"*

۞ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَآ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ رُشْدَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهِۦ عَٰلِمِينَ (51) إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦ مَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلتَّمَاثِيلُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أَنتُمْ لَهَا عَٰكِفُونَ (52) قَالُوا۟ وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا لَهَا عَٰبِدِينَ (53) قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنتُمْ أَنتُمْ وَءَابَآؤُكُمْ فِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ (54) قَالُوٓا۟ أَجِئْتَنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ أَمْ أَنتَ مِنَ ٱللَّٰعِبِينَ (55) قَالَ بَل رَّبُّكُمْ رَبُّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّذِى فَطَرَهُنَّ وَأَنَا۠ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُم مِّنَ ٱلشَّٰهِدِينَ (56) وَتَٱللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَٰمَكُم بَعْدَ أَن تُوَلُّوا۟ مُدْبِرِينَ (57) فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذَٰذًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ (58) قَالُوا۟ مَن فَعَلَ هَٰذَا بِـَٔالِهَتِنَآ إِنَّهُۥ لَمِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ (59) قَالُوا۟ سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُۥٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ (60) قَالُوا۟ فَأْتُوا۟ بِهِۦ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْيُنِ ٱلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ (61) قَالُوٓا۟ ءَأَنتَ فَعَلْتَ هَٰذَا بِـَٔالِهَتِنَا يَٰٓإِبْرَٰهِيمُ (62) قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُۥ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَٰذَا فَسْـَٔلُوهُمْ إِن كَانُوا۟ يَنطِقُونَ (63) فَرَجَعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّكُمْ أَنتُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ (64) ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا۟ عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ يَنطِقُونَ (65) قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنفَعُكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ (66) أُفٍّ لَّكُمْ وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (67) قَالُوا۟ حَرِّقُوهُ وَٱنصُرُوٓا۟ ءَالِهَتَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ (68) قُلْنَا يَٰنَارُ كُونِى بَرْدًا وَسَلَٰمًا عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ (69) وَأَرَادُوا۟ بِهِۦ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَٰهُمُ ٱلْأَخْسَرِينَ (70)

(51) Indeed We had granted Ibrahīm his correct course from before and We were ever Aware of him. (52) When he told his father and his people, "What are these statues that you are devoted to?' (53) They replied, "We found our forefathers worshipping them." (54) Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, "Verily you people and your forefathers were certainly in manifest error." (55) They said, "Do you bring us the truth or are you from the jesters?" (56) He said, "Nay, but your Lord is the Lord of the heaven and the earth, Who has created you. I am of those who bear witness to this." (57) "And by Allāh! I shall certainly formulate a scheme for your idols after you have turned your backs." (58) So he reduced them to fragments, except for the largest of them so that they may have recourse towards him. (59) They exclaimed, 'Who has done this to our gods? He is certainly from the oppressors!" (60) They said, "We have heard a youth make mention of them. He is called Ibrahīm." (61) They said, "Bring him before the people so that they may be witnesses. (62) They asked, "Is it you who did this to our gods, O Ibrahīm?" (63) He replied, "But this large one has done it. Ask them if they can talk." (64) They all searched their souls and said, "You are oppressors indeed." (65) They then lowered their heads saying, "You know very well that these cannot speak." (66) He said, "Do you then worship besides Allāh such things that can neither profit you, nor harm you?" (67) "Shame on you and those that you worship besides Allāh! Do you not understand?" (68) They said, "Burn him and assist your gods if you will do so." (69) We said, "O fire! Be cool and peaceful for Ibrahīm." (70) While they intended to plot against Ibrahīm, We made them the worst losers.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*, BREAKS THEIR IDOLS AND IS CAST INTO A FIRE

The people in the region where Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was born all worshipped idols. Although there was none to teach Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام about Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, Allāh imbued in him the correct beliefs. Allāh made him so staunch that none could mislead him. Allāh also granted him the ability to propagate this belief to the people. Referring to this, Allāh says, *'indeed We had granted Ibrahīm his correct course (of guidance) from before and We were ever Aware of him."*

"When he told his father (in particular) *and his people* (in general), *'What are these statues that you are devoted to?"* he meant to impress upon their minds the futility of worshipping lifeless objects. They could not give any suitable reply, so *"They replied, 'We found our forefathers worshipping them."* So they blindly followed in the tracks of their blind forefathers.

With conviction and vehemence, *"Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, 'Verily you people and your forefathers were certainly in manifest error."*

"They said, 'Do you bring us the truth or are you from the jesters?'" He replied by telling them that what he said was no joke. He told them, *"Nay, but your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who has created you. I am of those who bear witness to this."*

He then added, *"And by Allāh! I shall certainly formulate a scheme for your idols*

after you have turned your backs."

Allāh relates the episode in verses 85 to 98 of Surah Sāffāt (*Surah 37*) where Allāh says, *"When he [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] said to his people and his father, 'What do' you worship? Do you desire concocted deities instead of Allāh? What is your opinion about the Lord of the universe.' He glanced once at the stars and then he said, 'I feel ill.' So they turned their backs on him and left. He hurried to their gods and said, 'Do you not eat? What ails you that you do not speak?' He then turned to them, striking them with force. The people came to him in haste. He said, 'Do you worship what you carve whereas Allāh has created you and what you do?' They said, 'Construct a building for him and cast him into a blazing fire.' They devised a plot against him, but We made them the ones to look down."*

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the people of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام used have a celebration out of town every year, after which they returned to prostrate to their idols. It was when they went to one such celebration that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام broke the idols. On that day, his father told him to accompany them so that he may take a liking to their faith. As he walked with them, he looked at the stars (which they revered) and said that he felt sick. He then returned to the town.

The people had left food as offerings before the idols, so when Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام approached the idols, he said, *'Do you not eat?"* They could not reply, so he said, *"What ails you that you do not speak?"*

He then began to hit the idols with an axe until *"he reduced them to fragments, except for the largest of them so that they may have recourse towards him."* He then placed the axe around the neck of this large idol.

Some Commentators have mentioned that *"towards him"* refers to Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام i.e. they would now abort their religion *(Dīn)* and would turn to his religion (Dīn). Others say that *"towards him"* means that they would turn to this big idol and ask him who the culprit was. Seeing the axe around its neck, they may also think that this large idol was responsible. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 248*]

When the people returned to find their idols demolished, *"They exclaimed, 'Who has done this to our gods? He is certainly from the oppressors!" Some of those present said, "We have heard a youth make mention of them (when he threatened to plot a scheme for them). He is called Ibrahīm. They said, 'Bring him before the people so that they may be witnesses."*

When Sayyidina Ibrāhīm عليه السلام was brought before the people, *"They asked, 'Is it you who did this to our gods, O Ibrāhīm?' He replied, 'But this large one has done it. (If you people do not believe me then) Ask them if they can talk."*

"They all searched their souls and (realising the error of their ways) said (to each other), 'You are oppressors indeed.' They then lowered their heads (in embarrassment) saying, 'You know very well that these cannot speak."

This was a most excellent method of propagation because Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام got the people to admit their own folly. He then told them, *"Do you then worship besides Allāh such things that can neither profit you. nor harm you?*

Shame on you and those that you worship besides Allāh! Do you not understand?"

When the people could not find any reply to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, they blurted out, *"Burn him and assist your gods if you will do so."* (It is strange that these people had to hurry to the assistance of their gods, when the gods should have been assisting them!)

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that they kept Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام imprisoned in a room and began to build an enclosure in which they could light a large fire. Thereafter they started collecting wood to fuel the inferno. People were so antagonistic towards Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that sick people would vow to collect firewood if they were cured and women also took similar vows if any of their tasks were accomplished. People even bought wood to add to the fire, even if it meant that women spent the profits of their spinning for it.

Eventually they lit the fire. The heat of the fire was so intense that animals passing by it died of the heat. They stoked the fire for an entire week. Although a smaller fire would have sufficed to burn one person, the people exerted themselves to make the fire that big because they feared being disgraced if Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was not burnt by a smaller fire.

When the fire was ready, the people hesitated awhile because they did not know how to put Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام into the fire, since it was unapproachable. It was then that Iblīs, the enemy of the Prophets عليهم السلام, came to their aid. (Even today he continues to give ideas to the enemies of Islām). He advised them to build a catapult, with which they could cast Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام into the fire.

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was being thrown into the fire, the angels in charge of the waters came to offer assistance, telling him that, if he wished, they could extinguish the fire. The angels in charge of the winds also offered their assistance. However, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام refused their assistance, saying, *"Allāh is sufficient for me and He is the best of assistants."*

Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضى الله عنه narrates that Jibrīl عليه السلام came to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, asking him if he required anything. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام replied, "I do not require any assistance from you." Sayyidina Jibrīl عليه السلام then told him, "Then seek help from your Lord." Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said, *"My Lord has perfect knowledge of my situation. His knowledge suffices for me."* In this way, he handed his affairs over to Allāh without even making supplication *(du'ā)*.

Allāh commanded the fire saying, *"O fire! Be cool and peaceful for Ibrahīm."* Allāh added the word *"peaceful"* so that the fire does not become so cold that it would freeze Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. Consequently, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام stayed in the fire for seven days without being burnt at all. The only thing that burnt were the shackles that bound his feet.

The angel in charge of shadows appeared in the form of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام himself and kept him company in the fire. Since Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام was deprived of his clothes when thrown into the fire, Jibrīl عليه السلام brought for him clothing from Heaven *(Jannah)* and a carpet from Heaven *(Jannah)* as well. Jibrīl عليه السلام put the clothes on for him and spread out the carpet,

whereupon the two sat and spoke.

Nimrūd, the king, was astonished when he saw Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام in a garden, talking to someone while the wood around him was being consumed by the fire. He called out to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام saying, *"Can you get out of the fire?"* "Certainly," replied Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, and he came out. Nimrūd said, *"It seems that your Lord is exceptionally powerful, Even the fire is subservient to him. I shall sacrifice four thousand cows in the name of your Lord."*

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام said to him, *"Your sacrifices will not be accepted by Allāh as long as you remain an adherent to your religion (Dīn). Forsake your religion (Dīn) and accept mine."* Nimrūd replied, "I cannot forsake my religion *(Dīn)* and my kingdom, but I will sacrifice the cows." He then sacrificed the cows and desisted from persecuting Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 251*]

Surah Sāffāt mentions that the disbelievers said, *"Construct a building for him and cast him into a blazing fire."* They therefore constructed a special place where they lit the fire.

The entire nation converged on the plot to kill the solitary the Holy Prophet of Allāh عليه السلام, but were unsuccessful. Therefore, Allāh says, *"While they intended a plot against Ibrahīm, We made them the worst losers.*

The verse of Surah Sāffāt says, *"They intended to plot against him, but We made them the lowest."* [*Surah 37, verse 98*]

Much of what has been recounted above from "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" conforms with the narrative of the Qur'ān. However, the rest seems to be sourced from the Bani Isrā'īl. It has been narrated here though, because it does not contradict any law of the Shari'ah, nor any verse of the Qur'ān. We shall presently relate some Ahadīth pertaining to the same incident.

THE EVIL NATURE OF THE CHAMELEON AND THE PROMISE OF REWARD FOR THE PERSON WHO KILLS IT

Sayyidina Umm Sharīk رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed that chameleons be killed, saying that one of them blew at Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 474*]

This hadith means that the chameleon blew into the fire kindled for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام with the intention of stoking it further. Although its blowing would not have affected such a large fire at all, still the chameleon blew in it because of its inherent evil nature. An enemy leaves no stone unturned to cause injury to his adversary, even if it means doing the most insignificant act. Because of its inherent evil and the fact that it could be harmful to man, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed the Muslims to kill chameleons.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person who kills a chameleon with the first strike, shall receive the reward of a hundred good deeds. The person who kills it with the second strike, shall receive a lesser reward, and the person who kill it with the third strike shall earn a lesser than the second. [*Muslim v. 2 p. 236*]

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام WILL BE THE FIRST TO BE CLOTHED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You will all be resurrected bare-footed, naked and uncircumcised on the day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). The first person to be clothed will be Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام will receive this privilege because he was stripped of his clothing when he was cast into the fire.

THE THREE "LIES" OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام, BECAUSE OF WHICH HE WILL NOT WANT TO INTERCEDE FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF RECKONING

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام never lied, except about three matters. The first two were for Allāh's pleasure. The first of these was when he refused to accompany his people and said, *'I feel ill."* The second was when he told them, *"But this large one has done it."*

The third occasion transpired when he was once travelling with his wife, Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام. They happened to pass by the territory of a tyrannical king. Someone informed the king that a person [Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام] was passing by with an exceptionally beautiful woman. When the king sent a messenger to ask Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام who the lady was, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام told him that she was his sister.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام then told Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام that if the king ever called her up, she should tell him that she was his sister. This was because the king would retain her if he knew that she was his wife. He also told her that she could be called his sister because she was really his sister in religion *(Dīn),* since they were the only two believers in the land.

Nevertheless, the king forcefully summoned her to him. As she left, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام began performing Salāh. When the king tried to touch her, he became paralysed. He pleaded to her to pray for him, promising never to harass her again. When she did so, he was cured. However, he again attempted to touch her. This time the same paralyse took place more severely. He again pleaded with her to pray for him and promised that he would not harm her again. When she did so and he was relieved of the malady, he called his officer, telling him that he had not brought a human to him, but some devil.

He then released Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام, gifting her with a maidservant by the name of Hājar. When she returned to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, she found him engaged in Salāh. When he asked her what has happened by a gesture of the hand, she replied, *"Allāh had overturned the plot of the disbeliever upon him and given me a maidservant by the name of Hājar."* [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 474*]

The first of the three "lies" (when he said *"I feel ill "*) was mentioned so that he could have the opportunity to destroy the idols for Allāh's sake. The statement meant that he was not in the mood of accompanying them, which may be described as being sick. Using certain linguistic rules of Arabic, other Scholars

(Ulama) have interpreted the statement to mean that he 'could get sick,' which is not a lie at all. The people merely misunderstood what he really meant.

The second "lie" (when he told them, *"But this large one has done it."*) was mentioned to impress upon the peoples' minds that their idols were helpless. In this way, he was able to present Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to them. Scholars *(Ulama)* say that the statement could be interpreted as *"if he could, this large one would have done it"* or *"if these could talk, then it is also possible that the large one could have done it."*

The third untruth was also not a real lie because Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام was really his sister in religion *(D'īn)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not say that this third untruth was for the pleasure of Allāh because it included a degree of personal interest as well. However, it should be borne in mind that their journey was one of migration *(Hijrah)*, which was sure to be amply rewarded by Allāh. Then too, a person will be greatly rewarded for protecting the chastity of a believing woman, especially his wife.

"Fat'hul Bāri" reports from the "Musnad of Ahmad" that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه said, *"Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام mentioned the three things (that appeared to be untrue) for the protection of Allāh's religion (D'īn) and to combat his enemies."* [*v. 6 p. 392*]

These "lies" were therefore not really lies in the true sense of the word. They were only referred to as lies in the hadith because the lofty mantle of the Prophethood demands that the Prophets عليهم السلام also be cautious in these matters.

Bukhari (*v. 1 p. 74*) reports a hadith in which it is mentioned that on the day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* people will run to Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام to plead with him to intercede for reckoning to commence. He will declare himself incapable of the task and send them to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. When they will place the same request to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, he will also decline, saying that he spoke the above three untruths. For this reason, he will also consider himself unfit for this task.

Commenting on this hadith, Mulla Ali Qāri رحمة الله عليه writes that these three untruths were not really lies, but are referred to as such because they appear to be lies. This caused Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to consider Himself unworthy of this great intercession. The closer a person is to Allāh, the more he fears Allāh and apprehends accountability for even the slightest error. This applies to all the Prophets عليهم السلام who may have erred. Ibnul Malik رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that the perfectionists may be taken to task for certain deeds that would appear to be acts of devotions if carried out by others.

Note: A question has been posed about the third untruth of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام. The necessity of his statement has been questioned, because the tyrannical king would have apprehended Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام irrespective of whether she was the sister of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام or his wife. In fact, he did apprehend her despite the untruth. Why was it then necessary to say that she was his sister?

Commentators have mentioned that although the king was a tyrant, his religion *(D'īn)* demanded that he does not apprehend anyone's sister. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام expected him to adhere to his religion *(D'īn)* in this regard. However, the king was unable to resist the temptation of molesting her when he saw her stunning beauty.

When the king attempted to molest her, she made the following supplication *(du'ā)*, *"O Allāh! You know that I have believed in You and in Your Holy Prophet. I have also guarded my chastity, so do not, allow this disbeliever to overpower me." ["Fat'hul Bāri"]*

The ignorant king would not admit that he was wrong in his ways, but rather chose to call Sayyidah Sarah عليها السلام as devil. However, he did realise that she was a pious woman, because of which he gave the maidservant, Hājar as a gift. Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام later married Sayyidah Hājar عليها السلام and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام was born from her. The mother and son were later taken to Makkah.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام endured many trials and adversities for Allāh's religion *(D'īn)*, because of which Allāh declares in Surah Nisā, *"Allāh chose Ibrahīm for a friend."* Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام became known as the father of all the Prophets عليهم السلام.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام built the Ka'ba with Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام, after which he prayed for the people of Makkah saying, *"O our Lord! Send among them a messenger from their midst who will recite Your verses to them, teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Without doubt, You are the Mighty, the Wise."* Allāh accepted this supplication *(du'ā)* with the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم from his progeny via Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. Even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was instructed to adhere to the creed of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

وَنَجَّيْنَـٰهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَـٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَـٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُۥٓ إِسْحَـٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَـٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ ٱلْخَيْرَٰتِ وَإِقَامَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ ۖ وَكَانُوا۟ لَنَا عَـٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

(71) We rescued Ibrahīm and Lūt to a land that We had blessed for all in the universe. (72) We gifted Ibrahīm with Is'hāq and a grandson, Ya'qūb. We made all of them righteous. (73)We made them leaders who guided by Our orders, and We commanded them to perform good deeds, to establish Salāh, and to pay Zakāh. They were all Our worshippers.

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM AND LŪT عليهما السلام MIGRATE TO A BLESSED LAND

The above verse makes mention of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام, who was the son of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام's paternal uncle. They both left their homeland and

migrated to Palestine, which Allāh refers to as *"a land that We had blessed for all in the universe."*

Allāh says that thereafter *"We gifted Ibrahīm with* (a son by the name of) *Is'hāq and a grandson, Ya'qūb."* Sayyidina Ya'qūb عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidina Is'hāq عليه السلام.

"We made all of them righteous." They were all adherents of Allāh's commands and abstained from everything that He prohibited.

Allāh says further, *"We made them leaders who guided (others) by Our orders, and We commanded them to perform good deeds, to establish Salāh and to pay Zakāh. They were all Our worshippers."*

(74) We granted Lūt wisdom and knowledge, and We rescued him from a town that used to perpetrate despicable acts. They were certainly evil and lecherous people. (75) And We admitted him into Our mercy. He was indeed from among the righteous.

ALLĀH BESTOWS HIS GRACE UPON SAYYIDINA LŪT عليه السلام BY RESCUING HIM FROM A SINFUL NATION AND SHOWERING HIS MERCY UPON HIM

Allāh says that He *"granted Lūt wisdom and knowledge..."* After he migrated with Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh made him also a Holy Prophet عليه السلام and sent him to preach to certain towns near Jordan. The people of these towns engaged in numerous depraved actions, one of them being deriving sexual gratification from men and boys (sodomy). This vile deed dwarfed all other sins, causing the people to indulge in all other sins as well.

Despite all his efforts, the people refused to desist from their atrocities. Eventually Allāh punished these people by overturning their towns and raining stones on them. Allāh saved Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and the believers *(Mu'minīn)* (his family) from this punishment. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"We rescued him from a town that used to perpetrate despicable acts. They were certainly evil and lecherous people."*

This entire incident has been discussed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 80-84*] and Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verses 77-83*].

Allāh says further, *"And We admitted him into* (the ranks of those pious bondsmen upon whom We showered) *Our mercy. He was indeed from among the righteous."* The rank of the *"Sālihīn"* (the righteous) is indeed extremely high, the highest echelon of which is occupied by the Prophets عليهم السلام because of their innocence.

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ فَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُۥ مِنَ ٱلْكَرْبِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَنَصَرْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَآ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا۟ قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَٰهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

(76) And remember Nūh. When he called from before and We responded to him. So We rescued him and his family from tremendous distress. (77) And We granted him salvation from a nation who denied Our verses. They were indeed an evil nation, so We drowned all of them.

THE SUPPLICATION *(DU'Ā)* OF SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام AND ALLĀH'S SUBSEQUENT HELP

After preaching to his nation for an extensive period of *950* years, only a few people accepted the message of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. Finally, he submitted to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Do not leave a single disbeliever alive on earth."*

Allāh accepted this supplication *(du'ā)* of his and sent torrential rains and waters from the earth itself. As a result, all the disbelievers were drowned, while the believers were rescued on the ark that Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام had built. All the members of his family were also rescued, except his wife and one son.

Allāh says in Surah Nūh, *"On account of their sins, they were drowned and entered into the Fire."* A detailed account of this incident has passed in Surah A'rāf [*Surah 7, verses 59-64*] and Surah Hūd [*Surah 11, verse 25-49*].

Allāh says, *"So We rescued him and his family from tremendous distress."* This refers to being rescued from the floods and from the persecution of his nation.

وَدَاوُۥدَ وَسُلَيْمَٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِى ٱلْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ ٱلْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾ فَفَهَّمْنَٰهَا سُلَيْمَٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُۥدَ ٱلْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَٱلطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَعَلَّمْنَٰهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُم مِّنۢ بَأْسِكُمْ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ شَٰكِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَلِسُلَيْمَٰنَ ٱلرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِى بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ إِلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ ٱلَّتِى بَٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا ۚ وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَمِنَ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينِ مَن يَغُوصُونَ لَهُۥ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَٰفِظِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(78)Remember Dawūd and Sulaymān, when they arbitrated about a crop that was trampled by the goats of a people. We were Witnesses to their decision. (79) We explained the decision to Sulaymān and granted wisdom and knowledge to both of them. We subjugated the mountains and birds to Dawūd's service and

they all engaged in Allāh's glorification. We are the ones Who can do. (80) We taught Dawūd the skill of making armour, so that it protects you in your wars. Will you be grateful? (81) And We Subjugated the swift wind for Sulaymān.: By his command, it carried him to the land that We had blessed. We have knowledge of all things. (82) There were some Satan (Shayātīn) who used to dive for him and do other work for him. We are their Protectors.

ALLĀH'S BOUNTIES ON SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام AND ON HIS SON, SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام

"Remember Dawūd and Sulaymān, when they arbitrated about a crop that was trampled by the goats of a people. We were Witnesses to their decision." This verse refers to an incident that occurred during the reign of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام. A farmer brought a person to the court of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, claiming that the person's goats had escaped from their enclosure at night and ravaged his (the farmer's) crops.

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام ruled that all the goats should be given to the farmer as compensation. When the two left Sayyidina Dawūd's عليه السلام court, they met Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام. When he asked them what the judgement of his father was, they informed him about it. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام told them, "If I had passed judgement, it would have been beneficial to both parties."

He then went to his father and repeated the same statement. Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام asked him what he had in mind. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام said that the goats be put in the custody of the farmer so that he may use the milk and wool. In the meantime, the other person should be given the farm and work the land until the crops grow to the condition that they were when the goats destroyed them. Thereafter, the goats were to be returned to the original owner.

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was pleased with this decision and called the two back, instructing them likewise. Allāh refers to this decision when He says, *"We explained the decision to Sulaymān and granted wisdom and knowledge to both of them."* The author of "Bayānul Qur'ān" writes that this verse indicates that the original decision of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام was also correct. He decreed that the goats be given to the farmer because the value of the goats equalled the value of the crops. This conformed with the law and both parties were constrained to abide.

However, this decision was detrimental to the owner of the goats because he stood to lose everything. On the other hand, the ruling of Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام was beneficial to both, but required the consent of both parties. Once they both agreed, it was duly enforced.

This shows that the second decision did not indicate that the first was wrong. It is for this reason that Allāh said that He *"granted wisdom and knowledge to both of them.* - At the end, it should be borne in mind that this was an affair between father and son.

THE RULING OF THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

It has been reported that a camel belonging to Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضى

رضى الله عنه once wandered into the orchard of some people, and caused much damage. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم ruled that the owner of the camel was not responsible for the damage because it was the duty of the owners of the orchard to ensure that their orchard was secure during the daytime.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم added that the owners of animals should ensure that their animals are secured at night. They would be responsible for any damage caused by their animals if their animals caused damage during the night. [*Abu Dawūd*]

The different rulings of the jurists can be referred to in the books of jurisprudence.

ANOTHER STORY ABOUT SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام

Bukhari (p. 487) reports that two women had an infant son each. It transpired that a wolf attacked and fled with one of their sons. Each one of them then claimed that the living child was theirs. When the case was brought before Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, he, after much deliberation, awarded the child to the elder woman.

As the two were returning from his court, they chanced upon Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام, and related the entire incident to him. Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام told someone, *"Bring me a knife. I shall cut the child in half and give each woman one half."* The younger lady submitted, *"May Allāh have mercy on you! It is her child."* At this, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام handed the child over to the younger lady because her concern for the child was greater. This proved that the child was really hers. If it belonged to the elder woman, she would not have remained silent.

Both decisions (regarding the goats and the one about the two women) were not inspired by revelation from Allāh, but the respective Prophets عليهم السلام gave their verdicts based upon their personal knowledge.

THE KINGDOM OF SAYYIDINA DAWŪD عليه السلام AND HIS CONTROL OVER THE MOUNTAINS AND BIRDS

Allāh conferred upon Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام the divine scripture called the Zabūr. After recounting one of his decisions in Surah Sād, Allāh said to him, *"O Dawūd! Indeed, We have made you a deputy on earth, so judge between people with the truth, and do not follow carnal passions, which will mislead you from Allāh 's path."* [*Surah 38, verse 26*]

Allāh says in Surah Naml, "Indeed We granted knowledge to Dawūd and Sulaymān. They both said, *"All praise is due to Allāh Who has preferred us above many of His believing bondsmen." Sulaymān succeeded Dawūd and he said, "Oh people! We have been taught the speech of the birds and have been granted everything. This is certainly a manifest bounty."* [*Surah 27, verses 15, 16*]

In the verse under discussion (*verse 79 of Surah Anbiya*) Allāh says about Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, *"We subjugated the mountains and birds to Dawūd's service and they all engaged in Allāh's glorification. We are the ones Who can do."* All these creation engaged in glorification *(Tasbīh)* with Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام.

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Verily, We granted Dawūd a great bounty from Us. 'Oh mountains! Repeat (the Tasbīh) with Dawūd.' And the birds were also given the command. We also made iron soft for him."* [*Surah 34, verse 10*]

Says Allāh in Surah Sād, *"Be patient with all they say and remember Our slave Dawūd, the strong. He was certainly penitent. Verily, We subjugated the mountains with him, who would glorify Allāh by evening and at daybreak. We also subjugated the birds, who all gathered together. They were all penitent towards Allāh. We strengthened his kingdom and granted him wisdom and decisive speech."* [*Surah 38, verses 17-20*]

The Ahadīth report that Allāh had granted Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام a beautiful voice. One can well imagine the magnificent scene of him reciting the Zabūr with the chorus of the birds and mountains.

We have already explained how the seemingly inanimate creations of Allāh engage in remembrance *(Dhikr)*. This was mentioned in the commentary of verse 74 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh says, *'indeed there are some of them (the rocks) that fall out of the fear for Allāh."* However, we humans cannot understand how they make remembrance *(Dhikr)*.

THE SKILL OF MAKING ARMOUR

People in former times used coats of armour, shields and helmets to protect themselves in battle. Allāh mentions another favour upon Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, when He says, *"We taught Dawūd the skill of making armour, so that it protects you in your wars. Will you be grateful?"*

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"We also made iron soft for him* (for Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, andWe instructed him) *'Make coats of armour, perfect the links and you all should do good deeds. I am certainly watching whatever you do."* [*Surah 38, verse 11*]

Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام used to mould the links of the armour by hand and then piece them together to complete the coat of armour.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه has reported that Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام used to make one coat of armour daily, which he used to sell for six thousand dirhams. He woud then spend two thousand on the needs of his family, and the remaining four thousand would be used to feed the Bani Isrā'īl with bread made of fine white flour. [*v. 3 p. 547*]

The incident of the two decisions of Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام and Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام illustrates that a judge can retract his decision if another is found to be more suitable. However, this will apply only when his decision was not based on an explicit law of the Qur'ān or Ahadīth. It will apply when a judge bases his decision on a personal opinion in the absence of any explicit law from the Qur'ān and Ahadīth. Of course, when a law is categorically stated in the Qur'ān or the Ahadīth, it will be Unlawful *(Harām)* for the judge to use his personal reasoning.

Imām Dāraqutni رحمة الله عليه has recorded the following letter of Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه, in which the principles of court judgements are outlined. Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه wrote, "It should be noted that passing judgement

between people is an essential responsibility and should always be adopted. So if anyone comes to you with a case, then pass judgement in favour of the truth because the truth cannot be of any use if it is not enforced. Be just between people with regard to whom you admit to your gatherings, to whom you pay attention, and in your judgements This should be done so that no high ranking person may feel that you would oppress another because of him, and so that no low ranking person should think that you would oppress him."

He continues to write, "Presenting a witness is the duty of the plaintiff, while the defendant will be required to swear on oath (in the absence of a witness). While it is permissible to reconcile between people, reconciliation cannot be adopted when it means permitting something that is Unlawful *(Harām)* or forbidding something that is permissible *(Halāl)*. If you learn of the correct ruling after already passing one, let not your original ruling prevent you from enforcing the truth (the second ruling), because the truth is the real thing and error cannot alter it. It is better to take recourse to the truth than to be obstinate about error.

"Exert yourself to unravel whatever creates doubts in your heart. If you do not find any explicit guidance in the Qur'ān and the Ahdīth, then try to understand similar situations and examples. Then base your decisions upon an assimilation and comparative study of the two situations. Then you should pass judgement according to that which Allāh would be pleased with, and which seems most correct in your estimation."

"Grant the plaintiff grace to produce his evidence. When he does, then pass judgement accordingly, otherwise pass judgement against him. This period of grace will prove to be beneficial in unravelling the truth and bringing the criminal to justice."

"All Muslims are reliable and may offer testimony for each other. The only exceptions are those who have been previously lashed for slander, those whom you have previously found to be liars, and those who have been found guilty of nepotism in a previous testimony. The testimony of these people should never be accepted. Allāh knows the secrets of the hearts and peoples' intentions. Witnesses terminate disputes."

"Do not be agitated when people bring their disputes to you and do not let it distress you. Do not sit in isolation with those who have brought their disputes to you. Judge between them with equity and Allāh will reward you for it. Speak favourably of people solely for Allāh's_pleasure. Allāh will solve all those problems that may arise because of your association with people. Allāh will expose the faults of those who pretend to look good, but are really not so."

THE WINDS WERE AT THE SERVICE OF SAYYIDINA SULAYMĀN عليه السلام

"And We subjugated the swift wind for Sulaymān. By his command, it carried him to the land that We had blessed. We have knowledge of all things."

A verse of Surah Sād says that Sayyidina Sulaymān prayed, *"O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me a kingdom that cannot be had by any other after me. Undoubtedly, You are the Great Giver."* Allāh continues, *"So We subjugated the wind for him, which would blow gently by his command wherever he wished to go. (We also*

subjugated) the Shayātīn for him, who were builders and divers. Besides these [*Satan (Shayātīn)*] *there were others who were shackled in chains. 'This is Our gift, so spend or withhold without any accountability.' Undoubtedly, he has a close position to Us, and a favourable return."* [*Surah 38, verses 35-40*]

Allāh accepted the supplication *(du'ā)* made by Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام above. He was therefore given control over the Jinn and the winds. In a short while, the winds carried him and his army (consisting of humans, Jinn and birds) wherever they needed to go. Sometimes, according to the need, the wind carried him speedily, as mentioned in the above verse of Surah Anbiya where Allāh say that it was a *"swift wind"*. When Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام desired, it would also carry him gently, as mentioned in the above verse of Surah Sād where Allāh says that the wind *"would blow gently by his command"*. Allāh says in verse 12 of Surah Saba (Surah 34) that, in a single morning or in a single evening, the wind would carry them a distance that would normally take a month to travel.

Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام also had control over the Jinn, who would carry out various tasks for him. He would also punish them for any misdeeds and bind them in chains, from which they could not escape. Allāh says, *"There were some Shayātīn who used to dive for him and do other work for him."* The divers from them used to find various gems and jewels from the sea, bringing them back to Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام.

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"As he pleased, they would construct for him huge buildings, statues, dishes the size of dams and large pots which could not be moved from their place."* [*Surah 34, verse 13*]

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم CAPTURES A JINN

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that a Jinn once attempted to disrupt the Salāh of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh granted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the ability to capture this Jinn. The following morning, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم that he wanted to tie this Jinn to one of the Masjid pillars so that they could see it. However, he recalled the supplication *(du'ā)* of his brother Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام, when he prayed, *"O my Lord! Forgive me and grant me such a kingdom that will not be granted to anyone after me. Verily You are the Bestower."* Therefore, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم released him and Allāh sent him back disgraced. [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

According to a narration of Sayyidina Abu Darda رضى الله عنه, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"Allāh's enemy, Iblīs, came to throw a flame at my face. I thrice repeated, 'I seek protection with Allāh from you!' and 'I curse you with the full curse of Allāh!"* However, he was still not deterred. I then wanted to grab hold of him. By Allāh! If it were not for the prayer of my brother Sulaymān, I would have tied him up and kept him until the morning so that the children of Madinah could play with him." [*Muslim v. 1 p. 205*]

REMINDING SNAKES OF THE PLEDGE THAT THEY MADE WITH SAYYIDINA NŪH AND SULAYMĀM عليهما السلام

Tirmidhi reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you see a snake in your home, then say to it, 'We remind you of the pledge that you took

with Nūh and Sulaymān, the son of Dawūd عليه السلام, that you will not harm us.' If the snake reappears thereafter, then kill it." Since Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام had control of the Jinn and birds, it is obvious that he also exercised control over all the other animals and reptiles as well.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports that mention was once made of certain words that were reputed to cure the effects of poison. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم to recite these for him. When it was recited to him, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that there was no harm in saying them. These were the words that Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام derived from the poisonous creatures themselves. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 327*]

وَأَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُۥٓ أَنِّى مَسَّنِىَ ٱلضُّرُّ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِۦ مِن ضُرٍّ ۖ وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُ أَهْلَهُۥ وَمِثْلَهُم مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا وَذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَٰبِدِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

(83) And remember when Ayyūb supplicated to his Lord saying, "Difficulty has certainly afflicted me and You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy." (84) So We answered his call and alleviated the difficulty that beset him. We then granted him his family and the like thereof in addition as a special mercy from Us and as a remembrance for the worshippers.

THE DIFFICULTY OF SAYYIDINA AYYŪB عليه السلام

The above verses, as well as verses 41 to 44 of Surah Sād (*Surah 34*), make mention of the severe illness that befell Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام. However, no verse mentions exactly what disease affected him and for what period he suffered. These facts are not even mentioned in any Ahadīth from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, it is established that he suffered more than the average Prophet عليه السلام and that he lost all his children in the process.

All the narrations that have been mentioned about him find their source from the Bani Isrā'īl. The above verses make it clear that he prayed to Allāh for relief from his difficulty and Allāh accepted this supplication *(du'ā)* by granting him a cure from his illness. This was intended as a *"remembrance for the worshippers"*

"We then granted him his family and the like thereof in addition as a special mercy from Us..." Commentators have mentioned that this could mean that Allāh returned his lost family and children to him, or that Allāh granted him a new family after the first had died. The numbers of his family were doubled afterwards.

The details of this incident will be mentioned in Surah Sād. However, it should be borne in mind that the narrations stating that Sayyidina Ayyūb عليه السلام had to lie in the dumps for a long period does not seem authentic because it contradicts the high standards of purity and cleanliness that the Prophets عليهم السلام maintained.

The narrations stating that worms fell off from his body also does not seem correct because this would cause people to shun him, thereby hindering propagation.

وَإِسْمَٰعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا ٱلْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾ وَأَدْخَلْنَٰهُمْ فِى رَحْمَتِنَآ إِنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

(85) And remember Isma'īl, Idrīs and Dhul Kifl. They were all from the patient ones. (86) We admitted them all into Our mercy. They were indeed for the righteous.

SAYYIDINA ISMA'ĪL IDRĪS AND DHUL KIFL عليهم السلام

Allāh says that all three of these Prophets عليهم السلام were from the *"patient ones."* Mention has already been made of Sayyidina Isma'īl and Idrīs عليهما السلام in Surah Maryam. However, Sayyidina Dhul Kifl عليه السلام has been mentioned here for the first time in the Qur'ān. Mention of him will also follow in Surah Sād, where Allāh says, *"Call to mind Isma'īl, Yasa and Dhul Kifl. They were all from the very best."* [*Surah 34, verse 48*]

Since the Ahadīth do not make clear mention of Sayyidina Dhul Kifl عليه السلام, there exists some differences of opinion about his personality.

WHO WAS SAYYIDINA DHUL KIFL عليه السلام?

The following narrations have been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه. However, they also seem to stem from Isrā'īliyāt (narrations of the Bani Isrā'īl).

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned that the Prophet عليه السلام once gathered his people together and asked them who would assume the role of judge among them. However, he stipulated that the person should never become angry at any time. A youth accepted the post, but the Prophet عليه السلام repeated the question thrice. When the youth accepted the post all three times, the task was handed over to him.

Thereafter, it once occurred that Satan *(Shaytān)* awakened the judge while he was asleep and told him that another person had oppressed him. He grabbed hold of the judge's hand and led him away. As they were walking, Satan *(Shaytān)* released his hand and ran away. Despite being deceived after being rudely awakened from his sleep, the judge did not become angry and remained true to his post as judge. As a result, he was titled "Dhul Kifl" (i.e. "The one who upholds his responsibility").

"Durrul Manthūr" has also reported from Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه that Sayyidina Dhul Kifl was not a Prophet, but a pious person from the Bani Isrā'īl. He was given the title of "Dhul Kifl" because he undertook to fulfil the responsibility of worshiping Allāh day and night to succeed another person from the Bani Isrā'īl who had been doing so.

Tirmidhi has reported a hadith in which it is reported that Dhul Kifl عليه السلام was a person from the Bani Isrā'īl who could never abstain from sin. He once contracted a deal with a woman to continent adultery, and paid her sixty gold coins. When they were about to perpetrate the act, she began to weep. He asked, "Why are you crying? I never forced you into this." She admitted that she was not forced, but said that this was the first time that she was doing such a thing, and that necessity had forced her to do so.

He then allowed her to leave and let her have the sixty gold coins. He then repented and took an oath never to sin again. He happened to pass away the same night. The next morning, the inscription was found emblazoned on his door, "Allāh has verily forgiven Kifl."

It is possible that this person was another Dhul Kifl. If he were the same person mentioned in the Qur'ān, then it will have to be believed that he was not the Holy Prophet, because the Prophets عليهم السلام never committed any major sins before proclaiming Prophethood. It should also be noted that the hadith merely mentions the name Kifl and not Dhul Kifl. Commentators have merely quoted this hadith because of the similarity of names.

وَذَا ٱلنُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَٰضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ أَن لَّآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنتَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ إِنِّى كُنتُ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿87﴾ فَٱسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُۥ وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُ مِنَ ٱلْغَمِّ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُـۨجِى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿88﴾

(87) Remember the person of the fish. When he left in anger and thought that We would not straiten things for him, so he supplicated in the darkness saying, "There is no deity besides You. You are Pure. I have certainly been from among the oppressors." (88) So We responded to his call and rescued him from distress. Thus do We reward the believers.

THE INCIDENT OF SAYYIDINA YUNUS عليه السلام WHEN HE WAS SWALLOWED BY A FISH AND THEN RESCUED BY ALLĀH

The details of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام were given in Surah Yunus and will also be mentioned in Surah Sāffāt and Surah Nūn.

Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام was sent as a messenger to the town of Nineveh . After preaching to them for a long time, they refused to accept. Eventually, he warned them that they would be afflicted with punishment after three days. However, the people opted to repent to Allāh and believe after witnessing the signs of punishment. Allāh says in verse 98 of Surah Yunus (*Surah 10*), *"When they believed, We averted from them a punishment of disgrace in this worldly life and We granted them enjoyment for a while."*

In the meantime, however, Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام has already left the town. He left for the coast and boarded a ship. When the ship was in danger of sinking because of poor weather, the sailors exclaimed that there was slave on board who had fled from his master. When they thrice drew lots to determine

who the person was, the name of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام emerged each time. Consequently, he cast himself overboard to avert disaster to the ship.

He was swallowed by a large fish and remained alive in its stomach. There he engaged himself in Allāh's remembrance and recited the supplication *(du'ā)*, ***"Lā Ilāha Illā Anta Subhānaka Inni Kuntu Minaz Zālimīn"*** (translated above as *"There is no deity besides You. You are Pure. I have certainly been from among the oppressors."*).

Allāh says in Surah Sāffāt, *"If he were not from those who glorify Allāh he would have remained in its belly until the day people are resurrected."* [*Surah 37, verses 143, 144*]

Allāh says in Surah Nūn Wal Qalam, *"So patiently await the command of your Lord and do not be like the person of the fish. He cried out while containing his grief. If the grace from his Lord had not reached him, he would have been thrown onto land in a contemptible condition. However, his Lord chose him and made him from the righteous."* [*Surah 68, verses 48-50*]

The Qur'ān does not say that Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام committed any sin. He merely did not await Allāh's command to leave the place. However, ignorant commentators are still angry with him, even though Allāh has declared His forgiveness and pleasure for him. Allāh admonished him for his error just like how Allāh admonished the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he accepted ransom from the prisoners of Badr instead of executing them.

It is incorrect for people to say anything against the Prophets عليهم السلام. One is allowed only to quote what the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth have mentioned about them. This discussion has been mentioned in the commentary of verse 115 of Surah TāHā (Surah 20), under the discussion of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام.

Note: The supplication *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام includes the expression of Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* (*"There is no deity besides You."*), glorification of Allāh (*"You are Pure."*), and admission to sin (*"I have certainly been from among the oppressors."*). This shows that Allāh's forgiveness can be attained without actually mentioning the words of repentance and to seek forgiveness *(Tauba and Istighfār)*, when the above approach is adopted.

Sayyidina Sa'd رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, that the supplication *(du'ā)* of a Muslim will be accepted if he includes the supplication *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Yunus عليه السلام in his own supplication *(du'ā)*, i.e. if he recites, ***"Lā Ilāha Illā Anta Subhānaka Inni Kuntu Minaz Zālimīn."***

"Durrul Manthūr" has reported from Sayyidina Sa'd bin Abi Waqās رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Should I not inform you of Allāh's name? It is in ***"Lā Ilāha Illā Anta Subhānaka Inni Kuntu Minaz Zālimīn."*** The person who recites this forty times during his illness *(du'ā)* will die as a martyr if he passes away during the same illness. If he recovers, he will recover with all his sins being forgiven."

(89) And remember when Zakariyya supplicated, "O my Lord! Do not leave me childless, for You are the Best of Successors." (90) So We responded to his plea, gifted him with Yahya and allowed his wife to bear children. Verily, they would hasten to perform good deeds and supplicated to Us in anticipation and fear. They were humble before Us. (91) And remember the woman who preserved her chastity, so We blew Our soul within her and made her and her son a sign for the universe.

SAYYIDINA ZAKARIYYA عليه السلام PRAYS FOR A SON IN OLD AGE, AND IS GRANTED HIS REQUEST

Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام was childless and he feared that there would be none after him to continue the task of propagation. He was extremely old then and his wife was barren. Therefore, he made supplication *(du'ā)* to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Do not leave me childless, for You are the Best of Successors,"*

When Sayyidina Zakariyya عليه السلام was informed that he was soon to beget a son, he expressed surprise and said, *"O my Lord! How will I have a son when my wife is barren and I have reached the pinnacle of old age?"* The reply was, *"So it shall be. Your Lord declares, 'It will be easy for Me. Indeed I have created you before whereas you were nothing."* [*Surah Maryam (19), verses 8, 9*]

This episode has passed in Surah Āl Imrān [*Surah 3, verses 38-41*] and the beginning of Surah Maryam [*Surah 19, verses 1-15*].

THREE NOTABLE TRAITS OF THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام

Allāh then describes the attributes of all the Prophets عليهم السلام who have been mentioned in the Surah. Allāh says, (1) *"Verily, they would hasten to perform good deeds and (2) supplicated to Us in anticipation and fear. (3) They were humble before Us."* These qualities should be cultivated by every believer *(Mu'min)*.

About the first, Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and that Jannah (paradise) which has the expanse of the heavens and the earth, which has been prepared for the pious."* [*Surah 3, verse 133*]

The second trait teaches us that a person should always be positive that Allāh will accept his supplications *(du'ā's)*. At the same time, he should also be fearful of Allāh when thinking of his sins. He should be apprehensive that his supplication *(du'ā)* may not be accepted on account of his sins and the negligence in the etiquette of supplication *(du'ā)*.

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that supplication *(du'ā)* should be made when a person is fearful and also when he is not.

The third quality of being humble means that their hearts submit to the greatness of Allāh, because of which they do not display any pride. Allāh says that they are humble *"before Us."* This denotes that the greatness of Allāh remains imbued within their hearts, whether they are engaged in Salāh or not. Therefore, they always carry out the deeds that Allāh instructs them to do and refrain from what Allāh forbids them.

SAYYIDAH MARYAM AND SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام

"And remember the woman who preserved her chastity..." This verse refers to Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, who neither married, nor allowed any man to commit any sin with her. Allāh decreed that she should bear Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, so he *"blew Our soul within her..."*

Consequently, she bore Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام, whom Allāh made a Prophet, gave him the Injīl and sent him to preach to the Bani Isrā'īl. His story has been mentioned in many Surahs of the Qur'ān.

Allāh then says that He *"made her and her son a sign for the universe."* Allāh intended to demonstrate to people that He possessed the awesome power to create a child without a father, just as He created Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام without parents.

Allāh has declared that Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام was chaste. This was not declared in favour of any other woman. Therefore, another unmarried woman will be punished if she claims that she conceived without committing fornication.

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُونِ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَتَقَطَّعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ كُلٌّ إِلَيْنَا رَٰجِعُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

(92) This is indeed your religion (Dīn), that is the one and only way. I am your Lord, so worship Me. (93) They caused divisions in their affairs. Each of them shall return to Us.

THE RELIGION *(DĪN)* OF ALL THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام WAS THE SAME

All the Prophets عليهم السلام preached the same messages of Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*, the Prophethood and Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"I am the closest to Isā, the son of Maryam عليه السلام in this world and in the Hereafter. All the Prophets عليهم السلام are brothers, just like how people share the same father and have different mothers. The religion (Dīn) of all the Prophets عليهم السلام is the same, and there were no Prophets between Isā عليه السلام and myself."* [*Mishkāt p. 509*]

The religions *(Dīn's)* of all the Prophets عليهم السلام were principally the same. They differed only slightly in aspects that pertained to the finer aspects of

practice. The Prophets عليهم السلام impressed upon every person to accept that Allāh is their Creator, Sustainer and Master. Therefore, Allāh says, *"I am your Lord, so worship Me."*

- *"They caused divisions in their affairs."* Instead of remaining united upon their religions *(Dīn's)*, people fell into disputes: They fabricated false beliefs and split into various denominations. After the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, only those who adhered to his religion *(Dīn)* will be considered to be on the right path. The rest are all disbelievers and destined for the fire of Hell.

"Each of them shall return to Us." All the various groups and denominations of the Religion's *(Dīn's)* will have to answer before Allāh on the day of Judgement. There they will be justly rewarded or punished.

فَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ لِسَعْيِهِۦ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ كَٰتِبُونَ ﴿94﴾

(94) Whoever does a good deed as a believer, his effort will not be unappreciated in the least. We are indeed the scribes thereof.

THE GOOD DEEDS OF A BELIEVER *(MU'MIN)* WILL ALWAYS BE APPRECIATED

Allāh says in the above verse that He will definitely reward a believer *(Mu'min)* for any good deed that he may carry out. In fact, Allāh will multiply the rewards for every deed manifold. The least reward that he will receive shall be tenfold.

"We are indeed the scribes thereof" The angels appointed to record the deeds of man are meticulously engaged in their tasks. These records will be presented on the Day of Judgement. Allāh says in Surah Kahf, *"They will find their deeds present and your Lord shall not oppress anyone."* [*Surah 18, verse 50*]

وَحَرَٰمٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَٰهَآ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿95﴾

(95) It is an established fact that the town which We have destroyed shall never return.

DESTROYED TOWNS WILL NEVER REPENT

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه interprets the above verse to mean that the inhabitants of a town which has been destined to be destroyed will die as disbelievers. They will never receive the guidance to repent for their disbeliefs.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has also interpreted the verse to mean that these people shall never return to this world. However, many commentators tend not to accept this interpretation because every person, be he destroyed by Allāh's punishment, or if he dies naturally, shall also never return to this world.

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا فُتِحَتۡ يَأۡجُوجُ وَمَأۡجُوجُ وَهُم مِّن كُلِّ حَدَبٖ يَنسِلُونَ ﴿96﴾
وَٱقۡتَرَبَ ٱلۡوَعۡدُ ٱلۡحَقُّ فَإِذَا هِيَ شَٰخِصَةٌ أَبۡصَٰرُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ يَٰوَيۡلَنَا قَدۡ
كُنَّا فِي غَفۡلَةٖ مِّنۡ هَٰذَا بَلۡ كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿97﴾ إِنَّكُمۡ وَمَا تَعۡبُدُونَ
مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنتُمۡ لَهَا وَٰرِدُونَ ﴿98﴾ لَوۡ كَانَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ
ءَالِهَةٗ مَّا وَرَدُوهَاۖ وَكُلّٞ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿99﴾ لَهُمۡ فِيهَا زَفِيرٞ وَهُمۡ فِيهَا لَا
يَسۡمَعُونَ ﴿100﴾

(96) Until the time arrives when Gog (Ya'jūj) and Magog (Ma'jūj) will be released and they will scurry down every hill. (97) The true promise will be nigh and the eyes of the disbelievers will be fixed above. They will say, "Woe betide us! We were negligent of this. Nay! We were oppressors indeed!" (98) Yourselves and whatever you worshipped besides Allāh will be the fuel of Hell. You shall surely enter it. (99) If these really were deities, they would not have entered it. They will all remain there forever. (100) They will scream and shout in Hell and will be unable to hear.

THE GOG *(YA'JŪJ)* AND MAGOG *(MA'JŪJ)* SHALL BE RELEASED BEFORE JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)*, THE DISBELIEVERS WILL LAMENT ON THAT DAY AND ENTER HELL *(JAHANNAM)* WITH THEIR FALSE GODS

Allāh says that the disbelievers will remain adamantly upon their incorrect beliefs, rejecting the truth *"Until the time arrives when Gog (Ya'jūj) and Magog (Ma'jūj) will be released and they will scurry down every hill. The true promise will be nigh and the eyes of the disbelievers will be fixed above. They will say, 'Woe betide us! We were negligent of this. Nay! We were oppressors indeed!'"*

It will be only then that they will realise the error of their ways. However, it will be too late. They will now lament their previous rejection of the truth. They will now only have themselves to blame. The details of the Gog *(Ya'jūj)* and Magog *(Ma'jūj)*was discussed in the commentary of verses 92 to 99 of Surah Kahf (*Surah 18*).

Allāh will then tell the polytheists, *"Yourselves and whatever you worshipped besides Allāh will be the fuel of Hell. You shall surely enter it."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that the address in this verse is to the polytheists of Makkah. On the Day of Judgement, the polytheists will realise that *"If these* (gods) *really were deities, they would not have entered it (Hell)."*

However, *"They will all remain there forever* (without a chance of escape). *They will scream and shout in Hell and will be unable to hear."* The polytheists thought that their gods would intercede for them on the Day of Judgement, but will be utterly dejected to find them also burning in Hell,

The idols will not be cast into Hell for punishment, but to teach the

polytheists a lesson. Allāh has the power to place something in Hell without causing it to suffer, like the angels who are appointed to punish people in Hell.

(101) Indeed those for whom We have ordained the best, these shall be kept far from Hell. (102) They will not even hear its whisper. They will abide forever in whatever they desire. (103) The greatest fright shall not distress them and angels will welcome them (saying), "This is your day that you have been promised."

THOSE FOR WHOM THE BEST FORTUNE HAS BEEN RESERVED WILL BE FAR FROM HELL

When the verse *"Yourselves and whatever you worshipped besides Allāh will be the fuel of Hell,"* was revealed, Abdullāh bin Zab'ari (who was not yet a Muslim) said, "Therefore, Isā عليه السلام, Uzair عليه السلام and the angels will all be in Hell because they are worshipped." In reply to this statement, Allāh revealed the verse, *"Indeed those for whom We have ordained the best, these shall be kept far from Hell. They will not even hear its whisper. They will abide forever in whatever they desire."*

Further describing the good fortune of these people, Allāh says, *"The greatest fright shall not distress them and angels will welcome them (saying), 'This is your day that you have been promised."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that *"greatest fright"* refers to the second time that the trumpet will be blown on the Day of Judgement, after which people will rise from their graves and be ushered to the plains of reckoning.

According to Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه, the *"greatest fright"* refers to the time when the people of Hell will be condemned to it. Other commentators say that the *"greatest fright"* refers to the anxiety at the time when death will be slaughtered in the form of a sheep in the Hereafter. There is no contradiction between these various interpretations, since the fortunate people will be saved from all these frightful occasions.

When these people will rise from their graves, the *"angels will welcome them (saying), 'This is your day that you have been promised."* i.e. This is the day when you will receive the bounties promised to you for your Belief *(Imān)* and good deeds.

يَوْمَ نَطْوِى ٱلسَّمَآءَ كَطَىِّ ٱلسِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأْنَآ أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُّعِيدُهُۥ ۚ
وَعْدًا عَلَيْنَآ ۚ إِنَّا كُنَّا فَٰعِلِينَ (104) وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِى ٱلزَّبُورِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلذِّكْرِ

أَنَّ ٱلۡأَرۡضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ ٱلصَّٰلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾ إِنَّ فِي هَٰذَا لَبَلَٰغٗا لِّقَوۡمٍ عَٰبِدِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

(104) The day when We will fold the skies like the folding of written scrolls. As We initiated the first creation, We shall return it. This is a binding promise upon Us. We are undoubtedly the Ones Who can do. (105) Without doubt, We have already written in the Zabūr after the reminder that My pious bondsmen shall inherit the land. (106) There is certainly sufficient sense in this for the worshipping people.

THE SKIES WILL BE FOLDED ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND EVERYTHING WILL BE RECREATED

The previous verses made mention of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. In the above verses, Allāh tells people how easy it will be for Him to cause Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* to take place. About one of the greatest creations, Allāh says, *"The day when We will* (easily) *fold the skies like the folding of written scrolls."* There is no contradiction between this verse and others that state that the skies will be rent asunder and become red like dyed wool. This is so because the different occurrences will take place during various stages of the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*.

In reply to the question as to how will Allāh be able to recreate the creation after they have turned to dust, Allāh says, *"As We initiated the first creation, We shall return* it."It is normally easier to do something a second time because of the previously gained experience. However, all is the same to Allāh. Yet, the disbelievers refuse to believe in Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

"This is a binding promise upon Us. We are undoubtedly the Ones Who can do." The refutation of the disbelievers will not deter the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

"Without doubt, We have already written in the Zabūr (i.e. in all the previous scriptures) *after the reminder* [protected tablet *(the Lawhul Mahfūz)*] *that My pious bondsmen shall inherit the land."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضی الله عنه and numerous other commentators have mentioned that the *"land"* (Ardh) refers to Heaven *(Jannah)*. Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"All praise be to Allāh, Who has fulfilled His promise to us, made us inheritors of the Ardh [Heaven (Jannah)], and we may settle wherever we wish in Heaven (Jannah). Excellent indeed is the reward of those who perform good deeds!"* [*Surah 39, verse 74*]

However, even when the *"land"* is interpreted to refer to the earth, one may not raise the objection to say that the pious have not inherited the entire earth. The verse does not say that the pious will prevail over earth until eternity. They may have ruled at times, but the weakness of the Muslims caused their kingdoms to diminish and fall into the hands of the disbelievers and sinful Muslims.

"There is certainly sufficient sense in this for the worshipping people." There is enough food for thought for people to grow concerned over their situations in

the Hereafter. Ka'b Ahbār رحمة الله عليه says that the *"worshipping people"* refers to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه says that the *"worshipping people"* are those who are particular about their five daily Salāh. Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to those who practise their knowledge. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 341*]

وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحۡمَةٗ لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿107﴾

(107) We have sent only you as a mercy to the universe.

THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم HAS BEEN SENT AS A MERCY TO THE UNIVERSE

The above verse confers the title of *"Rahmatul Lil Ālamīn"* (*"a mercy to the universe "*) to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I have been sent as a gift and mercy to mankind."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned, "Allāh has sent me as a mercy to the universe and has commanded me to destroy musical instruments, idols, the cross and all acts of ignorance."

Before the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the entire universe was plunged into the abyss of disbeliefs and polytheism *(shirk)*. However, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spread the light of guidance throughout the world and gave rise to many believers *(Mu'minīn)*, the survival of each of them being fundamental to the existence of the universe. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will never come as long as there is someone saying, "Allāh! Allāh!" (i.e. as long as a single believer *(Mu'min)* lives). [*Muslim v. 1 p. 84*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, including the fish in the waters, seek forgiveness for the Ālim (the religious scholar). [*Mishkāt p. 34*]

The reason for this is that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will not come as long as there are people practising the religion *(Dīn)* according to the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, every person should make prayer *(du'ā)* for the students of religion *(Dīn)*.

It is mentioned in a hadith that a mountain calls another by its name and asks whether a person taking Allāh's name had passed on it that day. When the mountain replies in the affirmative, the questioning mountain becomes exuberant. [*Hisnul Hasīn*]

The exuberance of the mountain is explained by the fact that the existence of one such believer *(Mu'min)* guarantees that these mountains and all other creation will not yet be annihilated by Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. Therefore, all this is dependant upon that Belief *(Imān)* which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought to the world.

Another manner in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a mercy to the universe is in that he taught people the ways of drawing Allāh's mercy to

themselves in this world and in the Hereafter. Those who did not benefit from his mercy are like blind people who cannot benefit from the light of the sun. The fault lies with them and not with the sun.

The Ummahs of the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were destroyed when they refused to believe. However, the disbelieving Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will not be destroyed in this way in this world. They will suffer the consequences of their deeds in the Hereafter. This is also a manifestation of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم mercy to the universe.

Muslim reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked to curse the disbelievers. He replied, "I have not been sent as one who curses, but as a mercy." [*Mishkāt p. 519*]

When the people of Tā'if stonned and maimed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he could have allowed the angel in charge of the mountains to crush them. However, he told the angel not to crush them adding, "Perhaps their progeny will accept Islām." [*Mishkāt p. 523*]

Allāh says in Surah Taubah, *"Undoubtedly a messenger from yourselves has come to you. The difficulties that afflict you are very distressing to him. He is anxious for you (he wants the believers (Mu'minīn) to be in good stead in both worlds) and extremely forgiving and merciful unto the believers."* the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم possessed deep feelings for his Ummah and never wanted to see them in difficulty.

Whenever any of the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم would fall ill, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to visit them, console them and advise them about medicines and cures. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would be affected by the difficulties of the Muslims. He would visit the sick, comfort them and taught the Muslims how to do this as well. He even warned the Muslims against situations that could be harmful for them. For this reason he prohibited. people from sleeping on roofs that have no walls surrounding them, so that none may fall off and injure himself. [*Mishkāt p. 404*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person sleeps without washing the stickiness (of some food) off his hands, he will have only himself to blame if any harm comes to him." (e.g. some insect bites him). [*Mishkāt p. 366*]

For purposes of hygiene the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also advised the Muslims that they should not immerse their hands into water after awakening, for they cannot say where their hands have been that night. [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

He taught people to wear shoes saying that it was like riding a conveyance. Just as people are protected from dangerous creatures and harmful objects by riding, he will be protected when wearing shoes. [*Muslim*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also advised the Ummah to always repair the straps of their sandals if one broke and never to walk with only one shoe or sock because this will disrupt his balance when walking. [*Muslim*]

In this way the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised the Ummah just as affectionate parents advise their children out of immense concern for them.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم, *"I am like a*

father unto you and I teach you. Whenever you relieve yourselves in the toilet, do not face the Qibla, nor face your backs towards it." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also instructed the Ummah to make Istinjā with three stones and not to use dung for this purpose, nor the right hand. [*Mishkāt p. 42*]

He also advised that a person should see well where he is relieving himself e.g. It should not be a hard place that causes the urine to splash back onto him, nor a place where the wind blows against the direction of the urine. [*Mishkāt p. 42*]

In a similar manner he advised that a person should not urinate in a hole for fear of it being occupied by a snake or another poisonous creature. [*Mishkāt*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "My example and yours is like a person who lit a fire. When it began to light all around him, moths began to fall into the fire. He tries to prevent them from flying into the fire, but they overcome him and continue to fall into it. This is my example. I am saving you from falling into the fire of Hell by grabbing hold of your waists. However, you are overcoming me and falling into it." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, "*It is because of the mercy of Allāh that you (O Muhammad* صلى الله عليه وسلم *are lenient with them. If you had been ill tempered and hard-hearted, they would have all dispersed from around you. So pardon them, seek forgiveness for them and consult with them in matters. When you have taken a decision, then place your trust in Allāh. Verily Allāh loves those who place their trust in Him.*" [*Surah 3, verse 159*]

Whenever a person shook hands with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, he never removed his hand from the grasp of the person until the person did so himself. He would also not turn his face away from the person until the person did so himself.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضى الله عنه says that he never saw anyone more compassionate towards his family than the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He also says that he served the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for ten years and the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never once harmed him, nor ever rebuked him. He says that whenever any of the household people would scold him, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would say to them, "Leave him. Whatever Allāh decides must happen."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "The person who is not merciful will not have mercy shown to him." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

In another hadith, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* are like one body in terms of mutual affection. If any part of the body is ailing, the entire body becomes feverish and uneasy.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also mentioned that the unfortunate person is he whose heart is deprived of mercy. [*Mishkāt*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "*the Merciful has mercy on those who show mercy. Be merciful to those on earth, and the one in the heavens will show mercy to you.*"

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم said, "That person is not from among us who does not show reject to our youngsters, does not respect our elders, does not enjoin good and does not forbid evil." [*Mishkāt p. 423*]

It is incumbent upon the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to emulate their illustrious the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and behave like that single body in unity. The commentary of verse 128 of Surah Taubah (*Surah 9*) should also be referred to for more details.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ (108) فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا۟ فَقُلْ ءَاذَنتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَآءٍ ۖ وَإِنْ أَدْرِىٓ أَقَرِيبٌ أَم بَعِيدٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ (109) إِنَّهُۥ يَعْلَمُ ٱلْجَهْرَ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ (110) وَإِنْ أَدْرِى لَعَلَّهُۥ فِتْنَةٌ لَّكُمْ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ (111) قَٰلَ رَبِّ ٱحْكُم بِٱلْحَقِّ ۗ وَرَبُّنَا ٱلرَّحْمَٰنُ ٱلْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَىٰ مَا تَصِفُونَ (112)

(108) Say, "It has been revealed to me that your deity is but One Deity. So will you submit to this?" (109) If they turn away, then say, "I have informed you in a clearly distinct manner. I have no idea whether what you have been promised is nearby or still far off " (110) Without doubt, Allāh knows what is spoken loudly and He knows what you hide. (111) I have no idea whether it is a test for you or an enjoyment until a stipulated time. (112) The messenger said, "O my Lord.' Judge in truth! Our Lord is the Most Merciful, and the One from Whom assistance is sought against what you people concoct."

ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* AND THE WARNING AGAINST TURNING AWAY FROM IT

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *"Say, 'It has been revealed to me that your deity is but One Deity. So will you submit to this?'"* Only Allāh is worthy of worship and "the mercy to the universe," The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has come to invite man towards Allāh's worship only.

However, *"If they turn away, then say, 'I have informed you in a clearly distinct manner.'"* After the clear pronouncements and proofs expressed in the Qur'ān, people have no recourse but to follow.

About the warnings of punishment and Resurrection day *(Qiyāmah)*, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is further instructed to tell the people, *"I have no idea whether what you have been promised is nearby or still far off"* However, people should never think that these will never occur because of their delay.

"Without doubt, Allāh knows what is spoken loudly and He knows what you hide." The punishment for rejecting the truth will be met irrespective of whether a person declares his rejection or hides it within the inner recesses of his heart.

"I have no idea whether it is a test for you or an enjoyment until a stipulated time."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would not know why Allāh chooses to delay the punishment. It could be to test people, or because the time for their punishment has already been specified. They will therefore be allowed grace to enjoy themselves until then. The more they succumb to the pleasures and enjoyments of this world, the deeper they sink into disbeliefs. Thereafter, they augment the punishment due to them.

"The messenger said, 'O my Lord! Judge in truth!'" This supplication *(du'ā)* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was accepted when the battle of Badr took place. The result of this battle proved to the disbelievers that Islām was true and that it could withstand the forces of disbeliefs and decisively defeat them.

Allāh mentions on Surah Anfāl, *"If you require a decision, then indeed a decision has already come to you."* It is for this reason that the battle of Badr is called the day of "Furqān" i.e. when the truth is discerned from falsehood. The polytheists thought that they would annihilate Islām and the Muslims. However, Allāh made it so that the tables were turned against them and they were left as losers.

"Our Lord is the Most Merciful, and the One from Whom assistance is sought against what you people concoct." Allāh therefore showered His mercy upon the Muslim and provided them with the necessary assistance.

سورة الحج

Madinan	Surah Al-Hajj	Verses 78

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ ٱلسَّاعَةِ شَىْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ يَوْمَ
تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّآ أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ
حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى ٱلنَّاسَ سُكَٰرَىٰ وَمَا هُم بِسُكَٰرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ ٱللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ﴿٢﴾
وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِى ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطَٰنٍ مَّرِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾ كُتِبَ
عَلَيْهِ أَنَّهُۥ مَن تَوَلَّاهُ فَأَنَّهُۥ يُضِلُّهُۥ وَيَهْدِيهِ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ ٱلسَّعِيرِ ﴿٤﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) O people! Fear your Lord. The earthquake of Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is a tremendous thing indeed. (2) The day when you will witness it, every nursing mother will forget her suckling infant and every pregnant woman will abort. And you will see people in a drunken stupor although they will not be drunk, but Allāh's punishment is severe. (3) There are those people who, without knowledge, dispute with you about Allāh and they follow every rebellious Satan (Shaytān). (4) About the Satan (Shaytān), it has been decreed that he will mislead whoever befriends him, and he will lead him to the punishment of the Blaze.

THE TERROR OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)*

This Surah derives its name from the mention of Hajj in verse 27 of this Surah. In the opening verses, Allāh speaks about the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* so that those people who deem it an impossibility can be convinced about its reality.

Allāh begins by saying, *"O people! Fear your Lord."* Allāh should be held in awe as the greatness of His Being demands. This means that people should follow the teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the divine scriptures. This includes belief in the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, which is an extremely

grave matter.

Describing Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, Allāh says, *"The earthquake of Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is a tremendous thing indeed."* The day will be so grave that *"every nursing mother will forget her suckling infant and every pregnant woman will abort. And you will see people in a drunken stupor although they will not be drunk, but (they will be terrified because) Allāh's punishment is severe."*

Sayyidina Alqama and Sha'bi رحمة الله عليهما say that the *"earthquake"* referred to in the above verse will occur very close to Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. They say this because there is nothing to prove that women will be raised from their graves pregnant and with suckling children. They also maintain that there are Ahadīth supporting their opinion of an earthquake close to Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

Other commentators says that the earthquake will take place at the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, as mentioned in Surah Zilzāl . Allāh says in Surah Wan Nāzi'āt, *"The day when the first sound of the trumpet will resound, followed by the second."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that all things will shudder at the sound of the first blowing of the trumpet. [*Bukhâri v. 2 p. 965*]

Allāh says in Surah Wāqi'ah, *"When the earth shall convulse with violent earthquakes."* [*Surah 56, verse 4*]

In accepting this opinion, the question will arise about the nursing mothers and pregnant women i.e. where will they be then? The first reply to this question is that the verse presents a hypothetical situation i.e. If they were there, they would have forgotten the suckling infants or aborted. The second reply is that the possibility exists that Allāh will raise them in the same condition in which they died.

Other commentators say that the *"earthquake"* refers to the condition of the people and not to the shaking of the earth. (In this case it will merely be translated as a "shudder" or "quake." This is not impossible, because the Arabic word for an earthquake ('zilzāl') can also refer to the shaking of people. This form of the word has been used in Surah Ahzāb, where Allāh says, *"On that occasion, the believers were put to the test and violently shaken."* [*Surah 33, verse 11*]

This interpretation is supported by a hadith of Bukhari (v. 1 p. 966), reported by Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه. He reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh will instruct Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام to separate those people who are destined for Hell. When he will ask how many they are, Allāh will say that the people of Hell will number 999 from every 1000. Upon hearing this, every youth will turn white and every expectant woman will abort her child. *"And you will see people in a drunken stupor although they will not be drunk, but Allāh's punishment is severe."*

When the Companions *(Sahabah)* رضى الله عنهم heard this from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم they asked who will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* if only one from every thousand will enter. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Accept the glad tidings that a thousand people will be from the Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj and one will be from yourselves. By the Being in whose control lies my life! I have the hope that you will comprise a third of all the inhabitants of Heaven *(Jannah)*."

The Sahabah رضى الله عنهم then glorified and praised Allāh. Thereafter the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "By the Being in whose control lies my life! I have the hope that you will comprise half of all the inhabitants of Heaven *(Jannah)*. The sum of all the other Ummahs in comparison to yourselves is like the example of a single white hair on the body of a black bull or like a white patch on the front foot of a black donkey." [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 472*]

The same two replies can be given here to the previous question regarding the presence of pregnant and nursing mothers, since this question may apply here as well.

"There are those people who, without knowledge, dispute with you about Allāh and they follow every rebellious Satan (Shaytān)." Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports that a polytheist once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether Allāh was made of gold or silver. When he persisted in his obstinacy, Allāh caused a lightning bolt to decapitate him. Referring to people who ask such absurd questions, Allāh revealed the above verse.

Basing their ideas on their idols, the polytheists made these ludicrous statements. They were instigated by their friend, Satan *(Shaytān)*, to say these things and blindly responded to his bidding. They fail to realise that *"About the Satan (Shaytān), it has been decreed that he will* (in this world) *mislead whoever befriends him, and he will* (in the Hereafter) *lead him to the punishment of the Blaze."* Such are the terrible consequences of befriending Satan *(Shaytān)*.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِن كُنتُمْ فِى رَيْبٍ مِّنَ ٱلْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَٰكُم مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ
ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِن مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَنُقِرُّ فِى
ٱلْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَآءُ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوٓا۟ أَشُدَّكُمْ ۖ
وَمِنكُم مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنكُم مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَرْذَلِ ٱلْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنۢ
بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْـًٔا ۚ وَتَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ
وَأَنۢبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُۥ يُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُۥ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٦﴾ وَأَنَّ ٱلسَّاعَةَ ءَاتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَن فِى
ٱلْقُبُورِ ﴿٧﴾

(5) O people! If you are in doubt regarding resurrection, then (remember) We have certainly created you from sand, then from a drop of semen, then from a clot of blood, then from a lump of flesh, which was shaped or unshaped. (You were created from these) so that We may show you. And, according to Our will, We keep you in wombs until an appointed time. Thereafter, We remove you as children, after which you come of age. There are those of you whose souls We claim, while others reach the age of infirmity so that they know nothing after

once possessing knowledge. And you will see the earth barren, then we send rains to it, causing it to stir, flourish and grow every kind of beautiful species. (6) This is all because Allāh is the Truth, because He gives life to the dead, and because He has power over all things... (7) And (all this is because) Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is imminent - without any doubt - and because Allāh will surely raise those who are in their graves.

A REPLY TO THOSE WHO DENY THE COMING OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)* AND THE VARIOUS STAGES IN HUMAN REPRODUCTION

Many people think that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* and resurrection are impossible because they cannot understand how, after decomposing, bodies can be restored to life. Allāh replies to their qualms by explaining to them how they were initially created. Allāh says, *"O people! If you are in doubt regarding resurrection, then (remember) We have certainly created you from sand...* "The mould of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام was cast from sand, after which the soul was instilled in him. Thereafter, Allāh devised a system by which his progeny would grow. The system is presently described by Allāh.

Allāh then says that the human being is initiated *'from a drop of semen...* "When the male's sperm mates with the egg of the female, the child is said to have been conceived. Thereafter, this communion becomes *"a clot of blood."* This clot then develops into *"a lump of flesh."* This piece of flesh which is initially *"unshaped"* and has no definite form becomes the foetus of a newborn child. Later, Allāh fashions the various limbs, causing it to be *"shaped."*

Thereafter, this formed foetus is still kept in the womb of the mother until Allāh decides that it be delivered. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"And, according to Our will, We keep you in wombs until an appointed time. Thereafter, We remove you as children, after which you come of age. "* Even after birth, the child undergoes many changes and stages in life. It first passes the phase of childhood, soon to be followed by maturity, when it begins to understand things. The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that this age is between 18 and 30. Others say that it refers to the ages between 30 and 40.

Surah Ghāfir says, *'It is Him Who created you from sand, then from a drop of fluid, then from a clot of blood, after which Allāh extracted you as a child. Thereafter,* (Allāh preserves you) *to reach your strength, and then to become old people, the lives of some of you being taken first."* However, not everyone attains old age. Allāh says, *"There are those of you whose souls We claim (at an early age), while others* (after passing old age) *reach the age of infirmity so that they know nothing after once possessing knowledge."* Everyone witnesses these stages of life. It is only Allāh who allows man to pass from stage to stage, yet people find it difficult to believe that He can resurrect man for the Day of Judgement!

About the interpretation of *"shaped or unshaped,"* certain commentators say that it refers to children who are born and those who are miscarried (respectively). Others say that *"unshaped"* refers to those children who are deformed.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى

صلى الله عليه وسلم that the foetus remains as a drop of fluid in the womb for forty days. Thereafter, it assumes the form of a clot of blood for another forty days, after which it becomes a lump of flesh for forty days. After this stage, Allāh sends an angel to record the deeds, age and sustenance of the child. The angel also records whether the person will be good or evil. [*Bukhari*]

After explaining the stages of human development, Allāh speaks of another example. He says, *"And you will see the earth barren, then we send rains to it, causing it to stir, flourish and grow every kind of beautiful species."* Just as Allāh has the ability to cause the dead land to flourish with vegetation, He is also able to revive dead bodies as well.

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"From His signs also, is that you see the earth bare. Then, when We send rain upon it, it begins to stir and flourish. Verily, the One Who gave life to it is the One Who gives life to the dead. Indeed, He has power over all things."* [*Surah 41, verse 39*]

Allāh then says the development of man and the revival of the dead earth are *"all because Allāh is the Truth, because He gives life to the dead, and because He has power over all things. And* (all this is because) *Judgment day (Qiyāmah) is imminent without any doubt - and because Allāh will surely raise those who are in their graves."*

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يُجَٰدِلُ فِى ٱللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَٰبٍ مُّنِيرٍ ﴿٨﴾ ثَانِىَ عِطْفِهِۦ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ لَهُۥ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا خِزْىٌ ۖ وَنُذِيقُهُۥ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿٩﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاكَ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّٰمٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿١٠﴾

(8) There are those people who dispute regarding Allāh without any knowledge, any guidance, and without any book that directs towards light. (9) He is a person who turns and walks away to mislead (others) from Allāh's path. He shall suffer disgrace in this world and we shall make him taste of the punishment of the Blaze on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). (10) This is on account of what your hands have sent forth and Allāh is certainly not oppressive towards His bondsmen.

THE PROUD BEHAVIOUR OF THE REJECTERS AND THEIR PUNISHMENT IN THE HEREAFTER

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that the above verses were revealed with reference to Abu Jahl. Other commentators say that it concerned Akhnas bin Sharīk, while others are of the opinion that if refers to Nadhr bin Hārith. However, the verse is general in its context and may refer to any disbeliever who objects to the religion *(D'īn)* of Allāh without any relevant knowledge, basing his facts on his personal opinions and views.

Such people consider it an injury to their pride to accept the truth. Because of their pride, they turn around and walk away from the truth. Regarding this type of a person, Allāh says that he *"shall suffer disgrace in this world and we shall make him taste of the punishment of the Blaze on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)."*

When these people will be cast into Hell, they will be told, *"This is on account of what your hands have sent forth and Allāh is certainly not oppressive towards His bondsmen."* Allāh will never punish people for what they did not do.

Nadhr bin Hārith and Abu Jahl died at Badr, while the circumstances surrounding the death of Akhnas bin Sharīk still remain dubious. They will all be subjected to the tortures of Hell until eternity.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَعۡبُدُ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ حَرۡفٍۖ فَإِنۡ أَصَابَهُۥ خَيۡرٌ ٱطۡمَأَنَّ بِهِۦۖ وَإِنۡ أَصَابَتۡهُ فِتۡنَةٌ ٱنقَلَبَ عَلَىٰ وَجۡهِهِۦ خَسِرَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةَۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡخُسۡرَانُ ٱلۡمُبِينُ ﴿١١﴾ يَدۡعُواْ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُۥ وَمَا لَا يَنفَعُهُۥۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلضَّلَٰلُ ٱلۡبَعِيدُ ﴿١٢﴾ يَدۡعُواْ لَمَن ضَرُّهُۥٓ أَقۡرَبُ مِن نَّفۡعِهِۦۚ لَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡمَوۡلَىٰ وَلَبِئۡسَ ٱلۡعَشِيرُ ﴿١٣﴾

(11) Among man is he who worships Allāh like a person on edge. If any good comes to him, he is content with it. However, if any trial overtakes him, his face turns. He is at a loss in this world and in the Hereafter. This is the manifest loss. (12) He worships besides Allāh that which can neither harm nor benefit him. This is the far deviation. (13) He worships that, the harms of which are nearer at hand than the benefits. A terrible ally and a terrible companion indeed.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THOSE WHO ACCEPT ISLĀM FOR WORLDLY MOTIVES

Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 694*) reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that soon after some people arrived in Madinah, their wives bore sons and their horses also gave birth. They would then say that the religion *(Dīn)* of Islām is very good. However, when their wives and animals did not bear children, they would say that Islām was not good. The first of the above verses was revealed concerning these people.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported that Sayyidina Abu Sa'id Khudri رضى الله عنه transmitted the hadith that a Jew accepted Islām, after which he lost his sight, his wealth and his children. He then came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, requesting that his, pledge of allegiance be revoked because he considered Islām to be unfortunate for him.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "O Jew! Islām melts people with trials just like how a furnace melts iron, gold and silver, removing the alloys and dirt from it. The verse was revealed with regard to this incident. Other commentators say that the verse was revealed about the hypocrites *(munafiqīn)*.

Whatever the circumstances of revelation, the fact remains that people who accept Islām for ulterior motives do not remain Muslims. In reality these people do not really desire the truth and do not believe in Allāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Hereafter. Regarding such a person, Allāh says, *"He is at a loss in this world and in the Hereafter. This is the manifest loss."*

Regarding the person who commits polytheism and foolishly seeks

assistance from his idols and false gods, Allāh says, *"He worships besides Allāh that which can neither harm nor benefit him. This is the far deviation. He worships that the harms of which are nearer at hand than the benefits."* Worshipping these false gods will cause a person to suffer in this world as well as in Hell until eternity.

Allāh says regarding their false gods, *"A terrible ally and a terrible companion indeed."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that when the polytheists will see that they will be punished in the Hereafter for worshipping these false gods, they will cry out, *"Those whom we worshipped were terrible allies and terrible companions!"*

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ۚ إِنَّ
ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿14﴾ مَن كَانَ يَظُنُّ أَن لَّن يَنصُرَهُ ٱللَّهُ فِى ٱلدُّنْيَا وَٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ
بِسَبَبٍ إِلَى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ثُمَّ لْيَقْطَعْ فَلْيَنظُرْ هَلْ يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدُهُۥ مَا يَغِيظُ ﴿15﴾ وَكَذَٰلِكَ
أَنزَلْنَـٰهُ ءَايَـٰتٍۭ بَيِّنَـٰتٍ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَهْدِى مَن يُرِيدُ ﴿16﴾

(14) Allāh will certainly admit those who believe and perform good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. Verily Allāh does as He pleases. (15) He who thinks that Allāh will never assist his Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this world and in the Hereafter, should extend a rope to the skies and then cut (the process of revelation) to see whether his scheme will remove the cause of his anger. (16) In this way We reveal Our clear verses, and Allāh will definitely guide whom He wills.

ALLĀH HAS REVEALED CLEAR VERSES AND WILL GUIDE WHOEVER HE WILLS

In opposition to the despicable plight of the disbelievers and polytheists mentioned in the previous verses, Allāh now highlights the good fortune of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh says, *"Allāh will certainly admit those who believe and perform good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. Verily Allāh does as He pleases."* Allāh grants the ability to perform good deeds to whoever He wills and none can alter His decisions.

Allāh then speaks of those people who thought that the religion *(Dīn)* of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would last only for a while and would die away once he has left this world. They anticipated that Allāh would never assist the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the religion *(D'īn)*. Allāh says, *"He who thinks that Allāh will never assist his Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *in this world and in the Hereafter, should extend a rope to the skies* (and climb to the heavens) *and then cut (the process of revelation) to see whether his scheme will remove the cause of his anger."*

Allāh proposes this hypothetical situation to explain to the disbelievers that their enmity towards the religion *(D'īn)* will not cause it to be impeded in any way, let alone stopping it completely. No plot of the disbelievers will stem the tide of Islām. In a similar strain, Allāh has mentioned in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Tell them, 'Perish in your rage!"*

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the person who detests that Allāh assists the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم should renounce his ambitions. Allāh tells him that he may rather fasten a rope from the roof of his home and use it to hang himself.

Another interpretation of this verse suggests that it refers to the person who believes that Allāh has not been just in his stipulation of sustenance. He believes that Allāh has not given him enough, thereby not assisting him in the world and in the Hereafter. Allāh tells this person that he can do as he pleases even if it means that he hangs himself. However, he will still be unable to change the predestined fate decreed by Allāh.

The verse will therefore tell these people that they should not think that they gain anything by renouncing Islām, while they stand to lose something by remaining as Muslims. Do as they may, they can never change Allāh's divine plan.

Allāh then says, *"In this way We reveal Our clear verses, and Allāh will definitely guide whom He wills."*

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟ وَٱلصَّـٰبِـِٔينَ وَٱلنَّصَـٰرَىٰ وَٱلْمَجُوسَ وَٱلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوٓا۟
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَـٰمَةِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١٧﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ
أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُۥ مَن فِى ٱلسَّمَـٰوَٰتِ وَمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ وَٱلنُّجُومُ
وَٱلْجِبَالُ وَٱلشَّجَرُ وَٱلدَّوَآبُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَن
يُهِنِ ٱللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن مُّكْرِمٍ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۩ ﴿١٨﴾

(17) Those who believe, the Jews, the Sabians, the Christians, the fire worshippers and those who are polytheists, Allāh shall certainly decide between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). Verily Allāh is Witness to all things. (18) Do you not see that all within the heavens and the earth prostate to Allāh, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the beasts and many people. And there are many who justly deserve punishment. There is none to honour the person whom Allāh humiliates. Indeed, Allāh does as He pleases.

ALLĀH WILL DECIDE BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF ALL FAITHS. ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE HEAVENS AND EARTH PROSTRATE TO ALLĀH

Although the disbelievers are divided into many different religions *(Dīn's)* and creeds, they all share the common factor of disbeliefs. For this reason, they are collectively antagonistic towards Islām. There are now only two distinctions; Belief *(Imān)* and disbeliefs.

All of these denominations and religion's *(Dīn's)* also believe that they are correct in their beliefs and practices. However, Allāh will decide on the Day of

Judgement between them and disclose to them that only the Muslims were guided aright. Therefore, Allāh says, *'Allāh shall certainly decide between them on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah). Verily Allāh is Witness to all things."* Allāh has knowledge of everything and will recompense people accordingly.

Thereafter Allāh addresses the reader saying, *"Do you not see that all within the heavens and the earth prostrate to Allāh, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the beasts and many people."* All of these creations prostrate to Allāh in the manner that Allāh granted them the ability to do so. Other commentators say that *"prostrate"* refers to being subservient to Allāh's commands and dictates.

While all the creation of Allāh yield before Him, there are many people who choose to remain disbelievers. About them Allāh says, *"And there are many who justly deserve punishment. There is none to honour the person whom Allāh humiliates. Indeed, Allāh does as He pleases."* The disbelievers will be humiliated when condemned to Hell, as well as when their souls are extracted. They are even disgraced in this world.

The sinful Muslims also suffer humiliation in this world when they hanker after the wealth and titles of this world. They sacrifice everything they have to attain these prizes, only to be humiliated when they are killed by their enemies, or dismissed from their posts.

Note: Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه reports that once when the sun had set, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked where the sun had gone to. Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه replied, "Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم know best." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The sun keeps moving until it sets beneath the Allāh's throne *(Arsh)*, where it prostrates to Allāh. It then seeks Allāh's permission to rise and then rises when permission is received. The day is near when its prostration will not be accepted and it will not be permitted to rise as normal: Instead, it will be commanded to rise from where it had set. It will then rise from the west. Allāh says the same thing when He mentioned, *'The sun travels towards its destination.' Their resting point is beneath Allāh's throne (Arsh)."* [*Bukhari v. 1 p.* 454]

All Allāh' s creation prostrate to Him as the sun does. The plants and even the seemingly inanimate objects have a degree of sense, although much less than that of man. They are all subservient to Allāh as well. However, those creations that Allāh had blessed with intelligence, submit to him willingly and prostrate in the manner that we recognise.

Allāh says in verse 74 of Surah Baqarah, *"indeed there are some of them (the rocks) that fall out of the fear of Allāh."*

Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"There is nothing that does not glorify His praises, but you do not understand their glorification." [Surah 17, verse 44]*

Say Allāh in Surah Nahl, *"To Allāh's command submits all within the heavens and the earth, including all creatures and angels, and they are not proud."* [*Surah 16, verse 49*]

This subject has been discussed in the commentaries of the above verses. Allāh has also mentioned in Surah Nūr, *"Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out? Each one knows its Salāh (supplication special form of worship) and method of glorification."* [*Surah 24, verse 41*]

۞ هَٰذَانِ خَصْمَانِ ٱخْتَصَمُوا۟ فِى رَبِّهِمْ ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِّن نَّارٍ يُصَبُّ مِن فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ ٱلْحَمِيمُ ﴿١٩﴾ يُصْهَرُ بِهِۦ مَا فِى بُطُونِهِمْ وَٱلْجُلُودُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَهُم مَّقَٰمِعُ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ﴿٢١﴾ كُلَّمَآ أَرَادُوٓا۟ أَن يَخْرُجُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا۟ فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا۟ عَذَابَ ٱلْحَرِيقِ ﴿٢٢﴾

(19) These are two opponents who debate about their Lord. As for those who disbelieve, garments of fire shall be cut out for them and boiling water will be poured over their heads. (20) It will melt whatever is in their bellies, as well as their skins. (21) There will be iron hammers for them. (22) Whenever they will attempt to escape from the punishment out of grief, they will be returned and told, "Taste the punishment of burning."

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DISBELIEVERS IN HELL, WHERE THEY WILL WEAR CLOTHES OF FIRE AND HAVE BOILING WATER POURED OVER THEM

Allāh says, *"These are two opponents* (the disbelievers and the believers *(Mu'minīn) who debate about their Lord."* Their disputes sometimes lead to wars, the Muslim fighting for Allāh, while the disbelievers fight for their gods, whom they regard as *"their Lord'*

When the polytheists marched towards the battle of Badr, they prayed, "O Allāh! Grant victory to the army that is on the truth." When the Ansār advanced to combat the polytheists at Badr, the Quraysh said, "We have not come to fight you, but wish to fight our relatives." Thereupon Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ubaidah bin Hārith رضى الله عنه stepped forward to engage the enemy in combat. Shaybah bin Rabi'ah, Utbah bin Rabi'ah and Walīd bin Utbah advanced from the enemy lines.

Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه killed Shaybah, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه killed Walīd, while Sayyidina Ubaidah رضى الله عنه was fatally wounded by Utbah. In the skirmish Sayyidina Ubaidah رضى الله عنه also managed to mortally wound Utbah. Thereafter Sayyidina Hamza رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه killed Utbah and removed Sayyidina Ubaidah رضى الله عنه from the battlefield. He passed away at a place called Safrā while returning to Madinah. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه says that the above verses were revealed with reference to the two opposing armies at Badr. [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 565 and "Al Bidāya wan Nihāyah"*]

The general context of the verse will include every two opposing groups of disbelievers and Muslims. The battle of Badr was just an example of such a clash.

Thereafter Allāh describes the plight of the disbelievers in the Hereafter. Allāh says, *"As for those who disbelieve, garments of fire shall be cut out for them."* Clothing made of fire will be prepared for the disbelievers, adding to the torment which they will suffer in Hell.

In addition to this, *"boiling water will be poured over their heads. It will melt whatever is in their bellies, as well as their skins.* Explaining these verses, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Boiling water will surely be poured over the heads of the people in Hell. This water will reach their bellies, destroying everything within. It will then emerge from the feet, where after the process will be repeated. This is meant by the verse, *'it will melt whatever is in their bellies, as well as their skins."* [*Tirmidhi*]

"There will be iron hammers for them. Whenever they will attempt to escape from the punishment out of grief they will be returned and told, 'Taste the punishment of burning.'" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "If one iron hammer was placed on earth, all man and Jinn collectively would not be able to lift it."

According to another narration the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that a single strike from such a hammer would reduce a mountain to dust. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 4 p. 274*]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَهُدُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلطَّيِّبِ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْلِ وَهُدُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطِ ٱلْحَمِيدِ ﴿٢٤﴾

(23) Allāh will surely admit those who believe and do good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. There they will be adorned with bangles of gold and pearls. Their clothes in Heaven (Jannah) shall be of silk. (24) They will be guided to the best of speech and guided to the path of Him, Who is most deserving of praise.

THE JEWELLERY AND CLOTHES IN HEAVEN *(JANNAH)* OF THOSE BELIEVERS WHO DO RIGHTEOUS DEEDS

Allāh describes the bounties that will be bestowed on the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says. *"Allāh will surely admit those who believe and do good deeds into gardens beneath which rivers flow. Therein they will be adorned with bangles of gold and pearls. Their clothes therein shall be of silk."* Although gold and silk are not permissible for men in this world, it will be given to them in the Hereafter.

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Gold and silk are Permissible *(Halāl)* for the women of my Ummah, but Unlawful *(Harām)* for the men." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The man who wears silk in this world will be deprived of it in the Hereafter." [*Bukhari*]

Sayyidina Uqbah bin Āmir رضى الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you desire the jewellery and silk of Heaven *(Jannah)*, do not wear them in this world." [*Mishkāt p. 379*]

"They will be guided to the best of speech..." This verse means that they will be guided towards the recitation of *"Lā Ilāha Illallāh."* They believe in the teachings of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān and for this they shall receive the comforts of Heaven *(Jannah)*.

"...and guided to the path of Him, Who is most deserving of praise." Those who tread Allāh's path in this world will be allowed to tread the path leading to Heaven *(Jannah)* in the Hereafter.

Note: Although the above verse makes mention only of bangles, Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A crown will be placed on the heads of the people in Heaven *(Jannah)*. The brilliance of the dullest pearl on this crown is sufficient to illuminate the distance between the east and the west." [*Mishkāt p. 499*]

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلْنَٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَآءً ٱلْعَٰكِفُ فِيهِ وَٱلْبَادِ ۚ وَمَن يُرِدْ فِيهِ بِإِلْحَادٍۭ بِظُلْمٍ نُّذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

(25) Indeed those who disbelieve, forbid (others) from Allāh 's path and from the Masjidul Harām, which We have appointed for the people, residents and visitors being equal therein, and whoever intends to unjustly perpetrate an act of irreligiousness there, We shall let him taste a painful punishment.

THE RESIDENT AND VISITOR TO THE MASJIDUL HARĀM ARE ALL EQUAL AND IRRELIGIOUSNESS THERE WILL INVITE PUNISHMENT

The polytheists of Makkah prevented the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Muslims from performing their Salāh in the Masjidul Harām because they were the custodians of it. Even after the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم returned in the 6th year after Hijrah to perform Umrah, they did not allow him entry into the Masjidul Harām.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that the above verse was revealed with reference to Abu Sufyan and his companions when they resisted the entry of the Muslims to Makkah in the 6th year after Hijrah.

Describing the attributes of the Masjidul Harām, Allāh says that He has *"appointed (it) for the people, residents, and visitors being equal therein."* Certain commentators maintain that "the Masjidul Harām" refers to the entire city of Makkah. It is deduced from this verse that the people of Makkah cannot prevent outsiders from entering the city.

According to Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه, it is detestable *(Makrūh)* for the people of Makkah to let out their homes to outsiders during the Hajj season. Imām Abu Yusuf رحمة الله عليه 'and Sayyidina Muhammad رحمة الله عليه are also of this opinion. They have only said this because there is no clear proof in the Shari'ah to explicitly declare the act as Unlawful *(Harām)*. They have stated the ruling as above because people tend to exploit those who make Hajj by charging exorbitant rentals. This would inadvertently discourage people from performing Hajj because they are already burdened with the expense of travelling.

Many people make a fortune from subletting buildings that belong to others. Instead of assisting the people to perform Hajj, they wish only to make themselves rich.

Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that homes can be let out during the non-Hajj periods. However, the opinion of Imām Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is not clear about whether land in Makkah may be sold or not. The other Imāms of jurisprudence are of the opinion that it is perfectly permissible to sell land in Makkah.

"Whoever intends to unjustly perpetrate an act of irreligiousness there, We shall let him taste a painful punishment." Many commentators state that .the injustice referred to in this verse denotes polytheism *(shirk)* and all sins. Abu Dawūd reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that *"irreligiousness"* refers to 'Ihtikār' i.e. stockpiling necessary foods for the purpose of inflating the price.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه says that merely intending a sin in Makkah will invite Allāh's punishment, whereas this will be the case in other cities only when the sin is actually committed. This is so because Allāh says, *"Whoever intends to..."* [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 351*]

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that sins are multiplied many fold when committed in Makkah, just as the rewards of good deeds are multiplied. He also reports that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضى الله عنه had a house within the Haram and another outside the borders of the Haram (in the "Hil"). He performed his Salāh in the house that was within the Haram and would scold his children in the house that was in the "Hil". When asked about this, he replied that he interpreted using words like, "Never, By Allāh!" while scolding as *"irreligiousness."* Since the verse prohibited *"irreligiousness"* in the Harām, he did this outside the Harām. [*"Durrul Manthūr" v. 4 p. 3 52*]

Those who suffer this punishment in this world will surely meet with punishment in the Hereafter. The incident of the people who brought elephants to destroy the Ka'ba is well documented. Allāh destroyed them in this world with pebbles that were thrown by little birds. Theses pebbles reduced the mighty army of men and elephants to resemble *"a pile of eaten corn."*

"Durrul Manthūr" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه that a person by the name of Taba once set out to destroy the Ka'ba. When he reached place called Kurā'un Na'īm, a severe tempest struck. The wind was so intense that it became impossible even to sit or stand. He summoned two learned men who accompanied him and asked them the reason for the terrible windstorm.

Before replying to his question, they requested him to spare them if they replied. When he assured them that they had nothing to fear, they told him that the tempest was raging because he had set out to destroy a house that was safeguarded by Allāh. Taba then asked them what was to be done to cause the tempest to abate. They advised him that he should remove his clothing and wear two sheets of cloth. Thereafter, he should recite, "Labbaik! Allāhumma Labbaik!" and then make Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* of the Ka'ba. When he did this, the wind stopped. [*Ibid*]

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَكَانَ ٱلْبَيْتِ أَن لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِى شَيْـًٔا وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِىَ
لِلطَّآئِفِينَ وَٱلْقَآئِمِينَ وَٱلرُّكَّعِ ٱلسُّجُودِ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَأَذِّن فِى ٱلنَّاسِ بِٱلْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ
رِجَالًا وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِن كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ لِّيَشْهَدُوا۟ مَنَٰفِعَ لَهُمْ
وَيَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ فِىٓ أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَٰتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنۢ بَهِيمَةِ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ
فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْبَآئِسَ ٱلْفَقِيرَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوا۟ تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوفُوا۟
نُذُورَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا۟ بِٱلْبَيْتِ ٱلْعَتِيقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

(26) When We showed Ibrahīm the location of the house saying, "Do not ascribe any as partner to Myself and cleanse My house for those who make Circumambulation (Tawāf), those who stand (in Salāh), those who bow and those who prostrate. (27) And announce the Hajj among the people, they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, travelling from every distant road... (28)..... to witness the things of benefit for them and, during the stipulated days, to take Allāh 's name on every animal that Allāh has provided for them. So eat from it and feed it to the afflicted poor. (29) Then they should remove their untidiness, fulfill their oaths and perform Tawāf around the "Baitul Atīq".

SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام CONSTRUCTS THE KA'BA BY ALLĀH'S COMMAND AND ANNOUNCES THE HAJJ

The Ka'ba was initially constructed by the angels and Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام later reconstructed it for a second time. However, after the floods during the time of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام, no sign was left of the Ka'ba. Thereafter, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to reconstruct the Ka'ba. However, since the exact location was not known to Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh pointed it out to him, as mentioned in the verse, *"When We showed Ibrahīm the location of the house..."* Allāh sent a strong wind, which exposed the foundation of the Ka'ba for Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to see.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام told his son, Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام that his Lord has commanded him to fulfil a certain task. When Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام told his father that he should "obey Allāh's command, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام requested his help. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام duly complied.

Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام pointed to a hill and told his son that Allāh has

commanded him to construct a house at that location. The two then commenced raising the foundation of the Ka'ba. Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام used to bring the stones and Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام would lay them down.

Eventually, when the walls became high, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام used the stone known as the "Maqām Ibrahīm" as a ladder to continue the construction.

Allāh also commanded Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام saying, *"Do not ascribe any as partner to Myself and cleanse My house for those who make Circumambulation (Tawāf) those who stand (in Salāh), those who bow and those who prostrate."*

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"We commanded Ibrahīm and Isma'īl (saying), "Purify My house for those who perform Circumambulation (Tawāf) those who remain secluded therein and those who bow (in ruku) and prostrate."* [*Surah 2, verse 125*]

In these verses, Allāh commands that the Ka'ba and the Masjidul Harām be kept clean because Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* and Salāh take place there. This command includes cleansing the place from disbeliefs, polytheism *(shirk)*, lies and all types of evil and sin. Physical forms of impurities, like dirt and rubbish, must also be removed.

Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* can be performed only in the Masjidul Harām. According to Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه, the words *"those who reside there"* refer to those people who live in Makkah. Sayyidina Ata رحمة الله عليه says that it refers to those people who come from other places and stay in the Masjidul Harām.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has mentioned, "We are regarded as 'those who reside there' whenever we sit in the Masjidul Harām." The general context of the verse even includes those people who perform Seclusion *(Itikāf)* in the Masjidul Harām.

In both the above verses *"those who bow and those who prostrate"* refers to those people who perform Salāh in the Masjidul Harām. The words *"those who stand"* also refers to those people who perform Salāh. In this way, the three postures of Salāh [viz. genuflexion *(Ruku)*, prostration *(Sajdah)* and Standing up *(Qiyām)*] have all been mentioned.

Some commentators have interpreted *"those who stand"* to mean those people who reside there. Whatever the interpretation, the fact is clear that the custodians are obliged to keep the Ka'ba and the Masjidul Harām clean and to allow people to perform Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* and Salāh there at all times. With the grace of Allāh, the doors of the Masjidul Harām have remained open to people since the time that Makkah was conquered by the Muslims until today.

"And announce the Hajj among the people..." When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام completed the construction, Allāh commanded Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام to call people for Hajj. He submitted, *"O My Lord! How can I announce to the people when my voice cannot reach them."*

Allāh told him, *"You make the announcement. We shall ensure that the message reaches."* Consequently, Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام stood on Mount Safa (or, according to another narration, on the Mount of Abu Qubais) and announced, "O

people! Indeed your Lord has appointed a house, so make Hajj of it!" Allāh made the call reach every corner of the world and to reach every person who was destined to perform Hajj, even those people who were yet unborn in the wombs of their mothers or in the backs of their fathers.

Every person who was destined to perform Hajj until the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, responded to this call by saying, *"Labbaik! Allāhumma Labbaik!"* This has been reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه. People in the past could not understand how a person's voice could reach the entire world. However, with the invention of modern instruments, this is not hard to believe.

Allāh promised Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام that when he makes the announcement, people *"will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, travelling from every distant road..."* The Arabs used to feed their camels and horses less so that they would become lean and travel faster.

When Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام left his family in Makkah, he prayed to Allāh saying, *"cause some hearts of people to be inclined towards them."* Allāh accepted this supplication *(du'ā)* and until today millions of people have travelled from all parts of the world to make the Hajj. The people of Makkah have benefited tremendously from the influx of people to Makkah, and these people also benefit greatly from them in terms of the world and in terms of the religion *(D'īn)*. This has been referred to in the verse, *... to witness the things of benefit for them..."*

Some details of this have been given in the commentary of the verse, *"Allāh has made the Ka'ba, the sacred house, a means by which mankind remains in existence, as well as the sacred months, the sacrificial animal and garlands placed (around its neck)."* [*Surah Mā'idah (5), verse 97*]

"....and, during the stipulated days, to take Allāh 's name on every animal that Allāh has provided for them." Some commentators have mentioned that "the stipulated days" refer to the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. Remembrance *(Dhikr)* should be made in abundance during these days.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه has narrated from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that good deeds are most beloved to Allāh during the first ten days of Dhul Hijjah. The Sahabah رضى الله عنهم asked, "Is Jihād also not better than worship during these days?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Even Jihād is not better than worship during these days, except for the person who proceeds in Jihād with his wealth and life, not returning with either of the two." [*Mishkāt p. 128*]

Allāh mentions that, during these ten days, man should thank Allāh for the animals that he is able to slaughter. Although the animals are slaughtered only on the tenth day, the preceding days are spent searching for the animal, feeding it and preparing it for the day of sacrifice. These are all Allāh's bounties.

The religious significance of the sacrifice is that it secures Allāh's pleasure when the animal is offered before Allāh. The sacrifice is also of worldly benefit because one rides the animal, eats the flesh and drinks the milk.

Other commentators have interpreted *"the stipulated days"* to mean that days

of Nahr (10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul Hijjah). During these days, all the people of the world offer their sacrifices. Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* should also be made in abundance when people are slaughtering their animals at Mina. Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Carry out the Dhikr (remembrance) of Allāh during the limited days i.e. the days at Mina."* [*Surah 2, verse 203*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Pelting the Jamarāt and Sa'ī between Safa and Marwa have been ordained to establish Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)*." [*Tirmidhi*]

Every aspect of Hajj is filled with Allāh's remembrance, be it reciting the Talbiyah, Circumambulation *(Tawāf)*, Sa'ī or while staying at Arafāt, Muzdalifa and Mina. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 1 p. 178*) reports that Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضى الله عنه used to recite that Talbiya (*"Labbaik! Allāhumma Labbaik!...*) while in gatherings, on their beds and on the road.

Muslim (*v. 1 p. 3 60*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "Do not fast during these days because they are days of eating, drinking and remembrance of Allāh."

The *"animals"* mentioned in the verse refers to those animals that may be slaughtered during the days of Nahr and not all animals. One may slaughter only cattle, camels, goats and sheep. Oxen may also be slaughtered because they are like cattle. The age of these animals have been stipulated by the Shari'ah and the animals must be free of any defects, unless these are minimal. The details of this can be found in the books of jurisprudence.

Camels have to be at least five years of age before they are deemed fit for sacrifice. Cattle and oxen have to be at least two years old, while sheep and goats need to be at least one year old. Seven people can share a single camel, cow, bull or ox for sacrificial purposes.

The Qur'ān has termed the sacrificial animal to be slaughtered by the Hāji (person performing Hajj) as "Hadi." It is compulsory for the person performing Tamattu and Qirān Hajj to slaughter an animal. The animals can be slaughtered at any time during the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul Hijjah. If the Hāji slaughters the animal after sunset of the 12th, he will have to slaughter another animal as a penalty.

The person performing Tamattu or Qirān can shave or trim his hair only after slaughtering. If he does so before slaughtering, he will have to slaughter another animal as a penalty. The person performing the Ifrād Hajj does not have to slaughter an animal unless he wants to.

"So eat from it and feed it to the afflicted poor." There are four categories of sacrifices that take place during Hajj. The first is the animal slaughtered by those who perform the Tamattu and Qirān Hajj. The second is that animal that is slaughtered on a voluntary basis. These two types of animals (as well as the one slaughtered by people not on Hajj) can be eaten by the slaughterer himself. Although he can use the meat as he pleases, it is best that he reserves one-third for the poor.

The third category of sacrifice is the animal that is slaughtered as a penalty for an offence committed by the Hāji. The fourth is the animal slaughtered

because of "*Ihsār*" (i.e. when a person cannot complete his Hajj) These two types of sacrifice require that all the meat of the animal be given to poor people. Although it is best to distribute the meat among the poor people living within the Haram, it not obligatory to do so.

The person making the sacrifice cannot eat the meat of the last two categories of sacrifices, nor can his family eat from it, nor any person who possesses Nisāb.

Note: All the above four types of sacrifices, except the second (the optional one) have to be carried out within the Haram. It is best that the first takes place at Mina.

The detailed laws pertaining to the above can be found in the books of jurisprudence. Much has also been discussed in the commentary of verse 196 and the consequent verses of Surah Baqarah.

"Then they should remove their untidiness..." On the 10th of Dhul Hijjah, the Hājis proceed to Mina from Muzdalifa. The person performing the Ifraad Hajj will now pelt only the Jamara Aqba, after which he can have his hair shaved. However, if he wills, he can slaughter an animal before shaving or trimming. Those performing the Tamattu and Qirān Hajj will have to first pelt the Jamara Aqba, then slaughter, then shave or trim their hair. Thereafter they will be allowed to cut their nails and remove other unwanted hair from the body. This hair is referred to in the above verses as *"untidiness."*

The Hāji has the choice to have his hair shaved or trimmed, shaving being best. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice made supplication *(du'ā)* for mercy upon those who have their hair shaved, while he only made it once for those who have their hair trimmed. Women, of course, are not permitted to have their hair shaved.

When the man has his hair trimmed, the entire head should be trimmed by the length of about an inch. The minimum requirement is that at least the hair of a quarter of the head must be cut. If the hair is not long enough to meet these requirements, he has to have the hair shaved off.

Note: The recent practice of clipping only a few hairs is not established from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم. This practice will not qualify to release a person from Ihrām. He will have to (at least) shave all the hair or trim an inch off at least a quarter of the head's hair. If this is not done, the person will remain perpetually in Ihrām, after which he will be liable for penalties if he wears fitting clothes, applies perfume, cuts his nails, etc.

"......(they should) fulfil their oaths..." When people have vowed to carry out certain acts of worship, they will be obliged to fulfil these. Praising the righteous on Surah Dahar, Allāh says about them, *"They fulfil their oaths and fear the day when adversity will be widespread."* [*Surah 76, verse 7*]

"and (they should) perform Tawāf around the 'Baitul Atīq' (i.e. the Ka'ba)." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Zubair رضى الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh named the Ka'ba "Baitul Atīq" (the free house) because it has been

freed from tyrants and despots. They can never gain control of it.

There are three Farāidh (obligatory requisites) of Hajj. The first is to adopt the state of Ihrām. The second is to be present at Arafāt at any time from after midday of the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, until dawn of the 10th. This is termed "Wuqūful Arafah." The third is to perform what is termed as the Tawāfuz Ziyārah, Tawāful Ifādah, Tawāfur Rukan, or the Tawāful Fardh.

Commentators say that the above portion of the verse refers to the performance of this Tawāfuz Ziyārah because it follows after the removal of one's "untidiness." This was the procedure followed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, a person will be permitted to proceed straight to Makkah from Muzdalifa for this Circumambulation *(Tawāf)*. This Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* can be performed at any time during the days and nights of the 10th, 11th and 12th of Dhul Hijjah. If a person was forced by extenuating circumstances to delay this Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* until after sunset of the 12th, it can still be performed, but with a penalty.

If the Tawāfuz Ziyārah is missed completely, it cannot be recompensed. Only the person who dies after the Wuqūful Arafah is able to bequest that a camel or cow be slaughtered on his behalf as a compensation for the missed Tawāfuz Ziyārah. The meat of this animal must he distributed among the poor.

The Tawāf of Qudūm is the only Sunnah Tawāf during Hajj. This is performed upon arrival in Makkah. The Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* of Widā is Compulsory, and will be performed before leaving Makkah, after the Tawāfuz Ziyārah. However, this is only Compulsory for those people who live outside the Haram and Hil (i.e. the area adjacent to the Haram).

Every other circumambulation *(Tawāf)* will be regarded as optional. However, when a person vows to make Circumambulation *(Tawāf)*, it will be Compulsory for him to fulfil this oath. Every Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* comprises seven circuits around the Ka'ba, each with its beginning and end at the Hajrul Aswad.

Note: If the Tawāfuz Ziyārah is not performed, it can be performed at any other time during one's lifetime. However, a person will be unable to cohabit until the Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* is performed. If the person ever does cohabit, there will be different types of penalties, according to the specific act. Sometimes the penalty will be to slaughter a goat, while at other times, he will have to slaughter a camel or a cow.

If the cohabitation takes place several times in one place after shaving or trimming the hair, only one penalty will be due. If incurred at many places, several penalties will be due.

ذَٰلِكَ وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ حُرُمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦ ۗ وَأُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ

ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟ ٱلرِّجْسَ مِنَ ٱلْأَوْثَٰنِ وَٱجْتَنِبُوا۟

قَوْلَ الزُّورِ ﴿٣٠﴾ حُنَفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ﴿٣١﴾ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَن يُعَظِّمْ
شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِن تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ ﴿٣٢﴾ لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ
مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

(30) So be it. And whoever will respect Allāh's sacred things, then this will be best for him with his Lord. Animals have been permitted for you, with the exception of those that have been recited to you. So abstain from the impurity of idols and abstain from false talk... (31) .... in a state that you are inclined only towards Allāh, not ascribing any partners to Him. The example of the one who ascribes partners to Allāh is like one who has fallen from the sky, to have his remains snatched up by birds or blown off to a distant place by the wind. (32) So be it. And whoever honours Allāh's signs, then this is because of the taqwa of hearts. (33) There are things of benefit for you in it until a stipulated period. Then their destination is the "Baitul Atīq".

THE COMMAND TO REVERE ALLĀH'S SACRED THINGS AND SIGNS, THE SIMILITUDE OF THE POLYTHEISTS AND THE BENEFITS FOUND IN ANIMALS

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that the word "Dhālika" (translated above as *"So be it."*) is used in Arabic to denote that one subject has been terminated. It therefore signifies the beginning of another topic or another facet of the same topic. According to others, it serves to tell the reader that one should practise what has been mentioned.

Allāh says thereafter, *"And whoever will respect Allāh's sacred things, then this will be best* (and most rewarding) *for him with his Lord."* The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that *"Allāh's sacred things"* refers to all those things that Allāh has commanded man to revere, be these related to Hajj or not. This includes Salāh, the knowledge of religion *(D'īn)* and all the acts of devotion ordained by the Shari'ah.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه says that the instruction to respect *"Allāh's sacred things"* means that one should abstain from all sins during Hajj. These include disputing, behaving intimately with one's spouse, hunting, and perpetrating the acts that are normally forbidden in the state of Ihrām.

"(The slaughtering and consuming of) *Animals have been permitted for you, with the exception of those that have been recited to you."* i.e. recited to you in the Qur'ān. The details of these forbidden foods have been mentioned in Surah Baqarah, Surah Mā'idah and Surah An'ām the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has made mention of the rest.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" has mentioned that this point has been made here to inform people that the Hājis can slaughter the animals that are usually slaughtered as sacrifice. They are only not permitted to hunt and kill other

animals.

"So abstain from the impurity of idols..." Here Allāh warns the Muslims to abstain from the practices of the polytheists, who used to consider their sacrifices as devotions to their idols. Allāh has also mentioned this point during the discussion of Hajj because the polytheists added these practices to the Hajj rites that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام taught them.

They also added the following words to their Talbiyah, *"You (Allāh) have no partners besides the partners that are with You."*

Allāh then commands, *"and abstain from false talk..."* Although all lies should be shunned, this verse refers particularly to the lies that the polytheists spoke about Allāh. This occurred when they attributed certain fabricated prohibitions to Allāh. This discussion is given in the commentary of the verse in 103 of Surah Mā'idah (*Surah 5*), where Allāh says, *"Allāh did not ordain the 'Bahīrah,' nor the 'Sā'ibah,' nor the "Wasīlah,' nor the 'Hām,' but the disbelievers had invented a lie about Allāh. And most of them have no understanding.*

The subject has also been discussed in the commentary of verse 28 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says, *"When they perpetrate a sin they say, 'We found our forefathers upon this and Allāh has commanded us with it.' Say, 'Surely Allāh does not command lewdness! Do you say against Allāh what you know not?"'*

Sayyidina Khuraim bin Fātik رضى الله عنه reports that once, after the Fajr Salāh, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم thrice declared that rendering false testimony is equivalent to polytheism *(shirk)*. Thereafter, he recited the verse, *"So abstain from the impurity of idols and abstain from false talk in a state that you are inclined only towards Allāh, not ascribing any partners to Him."* This verse mentions *'false talk"* immediately after *"idols's* indicating that the two are linked.

Allāh then describes that condition of the polytheists. He says, *"The example of the one who ascribes partners to Allāh is like one who has fallen from the sky, to have his remains snatched up by birds or blown off to a distant place by the wind."* Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 286*) that this example depicts that the polytheist will be destroyed in any event and will not be able to avoid his imminent destruction, just like the person in the similitude. He will suffer in Hell until eternity, unless he repents and accepts Islām.

In my humble opinion, the similitude depicts the control that idols and other false gods have on people. These people have allowed these gods to control their lives, thereby placing themselves in the talons of these gods. They are then reduces to bits of flesh by these predators, having their remains scattered about.

The second similitude of being *"blown off to a distant place by the wind"* is similar to the similitude cited in Surah An'ām, where Allāh says, *"he whom Satan (Shaytān) had deviated from the path in a forest, leaving him bewildered when he has companions calling him to guidance saying, 'Come to us!"* The deviated person cannot reach the straight path despite being called from all directions. Wherever he goes, he falls deeper into deviation. Allāh knows best.

"So be it And whoever honours Allāh's signs, then this is because of the piety (Taqwa) of hearts." Only those people who have Circumambulation *(Tawāf)* will be

able to honour Allāh's *"signs."* Although Allāh's "signs" are included in the broad meaning of *"Allāh's sacred things,"* it has been mentioned separately to emphasise the command.

Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Verily Safa and Marwa are from the signs of Allāh."* Allāh says in verse 2 of Surah Mā'idah (Surah 5), *"O you who believe, do not legalise Allāh's signs..."*

"Allāh's signs" refer to all things that have been ordained as means of worship. However, some commentators have restricted the sense of this verse to specific things. Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه says that *"Allāh's signs"* are six, viz. (1) Safa and Marwa, (2) the sacrificial animal, (3) the area where pelting takes place during Hajj, (4) the Masjidul Harām, (5) Arafāt, (6) The "rukn" i.e. the Black Stone:

Respecting these *"signs"* means that the actions stipulated for these places should be carried out when one is present there.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه has mentioned that all the sites of Hajj are included in *"Allāh's signs."* Therefore, Mina and Muzdalifa will also be included.

"There are things of benefit for you therein (i.e. in the sacrificial animals) until a stipulated period." Before these animals are designated to be slaughtered as sacrifices, they can be used for various purposes like riding and milking. However, once they are fixed to be sacrificed, no benefit may be derived for them, even their wool cannot be sheared. They may be used for riding only under extreme conditions, when other animals are unavailable.

In the past many people used to take their sacrificial animals along with them from their homes. The rules that apply to such a person will differ from those that apply to other people. When performing the "Farewell Hajj," The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent many animals ahead with Sayyidina Nājiya Aslami رضى الله عنه. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه also brought many from Yemen for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. There were one hundred in number, all of which were slaughtered by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, with the help of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه.

Although the person performing Tamattu or Qirān has to slaughter only one animal, he will be greatly rewarded for every extra animal that he slaughters. The person performing Umrah does not have to slaughter an animal, but the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم took an animal along with him for Umrah (in the 6th year after Hijrah), which he had to slaughter at Hudaybiyyah after being prevented from entering Makkah.

The udders of the sacrificial animals should be sprinkled with cold water to prevent milk from filling. This will save the animal pain because the milk cannot be removed. The reins and saddle blanket of the sacrificed animal must be donated to charity and cannot be given as wages to anyone assisting in the slaughtering.

"Then their destination is the 'Baitul Atīq." The animals to be sacrificed during Hajj have to be slaughtered within the borders of the Haram. About the penalty for Ihsār, Allāh has mentioned, *"And do not shave your heads until the sacrificial*

animal has reached its place." This was also stated as a condition in the verse where Allāh describes the penalty for hunting. [*Surah Mā'idah (5), verse 95*].

Ruling: If the animal (which was to be sacrificed on an optional basis) comes close to dying while travelling to Makkah, it should be slaughtered on the spot and marked with its blood so that the poor may realise that they can use the animal. The owner may not use any part of this animal.

If it is Compulsory for the person to sacrifice an animal and if it develops a defect, or falls seriously ill en route to Makkah, he will have to purchase a replacement. He can then do as he pleases with the first animal.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنۢ بَهِيمَةِ
ٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ ۗ فَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَٰحِدٌ فَلَهُۥٓ أَسْلِمُوا۟ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُخْبِتِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ
ٱللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ وَٱلْمُقِيمِى ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ
يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

(34) We have ordained rites for every nation so that they may take Allāh's name on the animals that Allāh has provided for them. Your Deity is but One Deity, so submit to Him. And convey glad tidings to the humble... (35) Those who, when Allāh is mentioned, their hearts tremble, who patiently endure the adversities that afflict them, who establish Salāh and spend (in charity) from what We have provided for them.

GLAD TIDINGS ARE FOR THOSE WHO ARE HUMBLE, CONSCIOUS OF ALLĀH, PATIENT, AND ARE PARTICULAR ABOUT SALĀH AND CHARITY

The Arabic word "mansak" translated above as *"rites"*) refers to all forms of worship, as well as sacrificing animals and the other rites and rituals of Hajj. The verse could refer to all these meanings. However, judging from the context of the verse, it would more appropriately refer to the sacrificing of animals. Allāh says, *"We have ordained rites for every nation so that they may take Allāh's name on the animals that Allāh has provided for them. Your Deity is but One Deity, so submit to Him."*

Thereafter, Allāh says, *'And convey glad tidings to the humble..."* Describing who these people are, Allāh then says that they are *"Those who, when Allāh* (or His qualities, commands, warnings, etc) *is mentioned, their hearts tremble."*

Further describing them, Allāh continues to say that they are those *"who patiently endure the adversities that afflict them, who establish Salāh and spend (in charity) from what We have provided for them."* This includes spending in Zakāh and all other avenues, not forgetting spending on animals for sacrificial purposes.

وَٱلْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَٰهَا لَكُم مِّن شَعَٰٓئِرِ ٱللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ فَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا
صَوَآفَّ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا۟ مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا۟ ٱلْقَانِعَ وَٱلْمُعْتَرَّ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرْنَٰهَا
لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿36﴾ لَن يَنَالَ ٱللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلَٰكِن يَنَالُهُ ٱلتَّقْوَىٰ
مِنكُمْ كَذَٰلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿37﴾

(36) And We have made the large animals from Allāh's signs, in which lies good for you. So take Allāh's name on them as they stand in rows. Then eat from them when they fall on their sides, and feed the perseverant and the mendicant. We have subjugated them for you in this manner so that you be grateful. (37) Their flesh and blood will never reach Allāh, but your taqwa will reach Him. Allāh has subjugated them for you in this way so that you proclaim His greatness for the guidance that He has granted you. And convey glad tidings to those who do good.

THE SACRIFICIAL ANIMAL IS FROM ALLĀH'S SIGNS AND SHOULD BE FED TO THOSE WHO ARE CONTENT AS WELL AS TO THOSE WHO BEG

The Arabic word *"budn,"* (translated above as *"large animals"*) is the plural of "badanah" and refers to camels and cattle according to Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه. Allāh says, *"And We have made the large animals from Allāh 's signs, in which lies good for you."* The benefits of these animals lie in this world (as is commonly understood), as well as in the Hereafter (because sacrificing them for Allāh will earn great rewards in the Hereafter).

According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, the *"large animal"* refers only to the camel when applied to the rules of the average sacrificial animal. However, he say that when the word is used with reference to the rites of Hajj, it would refer to all types of animals that may normally be sacrificed viz, camels, cattle, goats and sheep.

The Arab tribes possessed many camels and even kept records of the lineage of these camels. When the time for Hajj came, they would line up the camels, tie their legs and slaughter them while the camel stood. This is referred to as *"nahr."* The wisdom behind slaughtering them standing is that their souls emerge more easily in this way. After slaughtering the camels, they fall to the ground and are skinned.

Referring to the process of nahr, Allāh says, *"So take Allāh's name on them as they stand in rows. Then eat from them when they fall on their sides, and feed the perseverant* (i.e. the one who is needy, yet does not beg from others) *and the mendicant."* It is more virtuous to give to those who are needy but do not beg.

"We have subjugated them for you in this manner so that you be grateful." Man should thank Allāh for causing these animals to be subservient to him so that he

can derive various benefits from them. If it were not for Allāh, man could never subjugate these animals, who are larger and stronger than he.

"Their flesh and blood will never reach Allāh, but your piety (taqawa) will reach Him." Man derives, the benefit of the animal's meat and organs. Allāh does not require these things. Allāh looks for the person's sincerity and devotion to Him when slaughtering. He must offer the sacrifice solely for Allāh's pleasure and not for any other ulterior motive. Allāh knows the inner secrets of the heart and what intentions they bear.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the most beloved act to Allāh on the day of nahar (10th of Dhul Hijjah) is the spilling of blood (of sacrificial animals). The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم continued to say, "The animal will appear with its horns, hairs and hooves on the Day of Judgement and it is accepted even before the first drop of blood falls to the ground. Therefore sacrifice them with a happy heart." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Zaid bin Arqam رضى الله عنه narrates that the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "What is this sacrifice?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "It is the practice of your father Ibrahīm عليه السلام." They enquired, "What reward is in it for us?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You will receive the reward of a good deed for every hair on the animal's body."

The Sahabah رضى الله عنهم then asked, "What about those animals that have wool?" the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You will receive the reward of a good deed for every fibre of wool."

"Allāh has subjugated them for you in this way so that you proclaim His greatness for the guidance that He has granted you." None would be able to carry out any virtuous deeds without the gift of Belief *(Imān)* and the guidance from Allāh. Had Allāh not granted guidance to the Muslims, they would also be slaughtering animals for false gods. Therefore, He has to be thanked in abundance.

"And convey glad tidings to those who do good." All those who are sincere, worshipping, believing and grateful slaves of Allāh must be congratulated because they shall all be blessed with innumerable bounties in the Hereafter.

(38) Verily Allāh defends those who believe. Allāh surely does not like every treacherous ingrate.

ALLĀH DEFENDS THE BELIEVERS AND DETESTS THOSE WHO ARE TRAITORS AND UNGRATEFUL

It was mentioned earlier that the polytheists prevented the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم from entering Makkah during the 6th year after Hijrah. They permitted him to perform his Umrah only the following year after attaching many conditions. In the above verse, Allāh assures the believers *(Mu'minīn)* that these types of obstacles will come from time to time, but Allāh

will grant the Muslims eventual victory. Allāh fulfilled this reassurance when He allowed them to march unharmed into Makkah during the 8th year after Hijrah.

Allāh says, *"Allāh surely does not like every treacherous ingrate."* Every disbeliever and polytheist is treacherous because they do not worship Allāh and do not follow the teachings of His scriptures. They are also ingrates because although they have been created by Allāh, yet they opt to worship others. Allāh grants them whatever they need, yet they follow religion's *(D'īn's)* that they have fabricated. Allāh detests such people and will soon teach them a lesson.

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا۟ ۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿39﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا۟
مِن دِيَٰرِهِم بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّآ أَن يَقُولُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلنَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَٰمِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَٰتٌ وَمَسَٰجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا ٱسْمُ ٱللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ
وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ ٱللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُۥٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿40﴾ ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمْ فِى
ٱلْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَمَرُوا۟ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا۟ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلْأُمُورِ ﴿41﴾

(39) Permission has been granted to those who are under attack because they have been oppressed. Without doubt, Allāh is Most Capable of rendering assistance to them... (40) Those who were driven from their homes only because they proclaimed, "Allāh is our Lord!" If it were not for the fact that Allāh opposes some people with others, monasteries, churches and synagogues would be destroyed, as well as Masājid in which Allāh 's name is taken in abundance. Allāh will certainly assist those who assist Him. Verily Allāh is Omnipotent, Mighty. (41) These are people who, if We grant them authority on earth, they establish Salāh, pay Zakāh, enjoin good and forbid evil. The result of all deeds rest with Allāh.

THE PERMISSION TO WAGE JIHĀD, ITS BENEFITS AND THE DUTY OF LEADERS

It was normally the poor people who were the first to accept the message of Islām. They were harshly persecuted by the Polytheists and were forced to migrate to Abysinnia and later to Madinah. They were enjoined to patiently endure the sufferings in Makkah, without being permitted to retaliate. However, once they regrouped in Madinah, they became a united force. Only then were they permitted to wage Jihād.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه reports that when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم made the Hijrah to Madinah, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said, "Those people who drove their Prophet out of his town will certainly be destroyed." Thereupon Allāh revealed the above verse saying, *"Permission (to wage Jihād) has been granted to those who are under attack because they have been oppressed. Without doubt, Allāh is Most Capable of rendering assistance to them..."*

After hearing the verse, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه said, "I have understood from this verse that the polytheists will soon attack The following year, the battle of Badr took place, soon to be followed by the battle of Uhud and many others thereafter.

If Allāh had so desired, He could have granted the Muslims safety in Makkah and then in Madinah as well. However, Allāh desired that the lives and wealth of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* be spent for the religion *(D'īn)* so that they can attain great rewards in, the Hereafter.

The disbelievers and the polytheists had no reason to compel the Muslims to leave their homes because they had not committed any crime. The only reason they harassed them was that they accepted Islām and took Allāh as their Lord. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"Those who were driven from their homes only because they proclaimed, 'Allāh is our Lord!'"*

Jihād has been carrying on throughout the history of man because there has always been an ongoing struggle between disbeliefs and Belief *(Imān)*. The previous Prophets عليهم السلام also led their followers into battle against the disbelievers. Allāh has instituted Jihād for the protection of the true religion's *(Dīn's)* and their places of worship throughout the ages. Allāh says, *"If it were not for the fact that Allāh opposes some people with others, monasteries, churches (of the Christians) and synagogues (of the Jews) would be destroyed, as well as Masājid in which Allāh 's name is taken in abundance. Allāh will certainly assist those who assist Him. Verily Allāh is Omnipotent, Mighty."*

After the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, all other religion's *(D'īn's)* have paled into insignificance and no longer exist as true religion's *(D'īn's)*. The disbelievers have all united now in their attempts to fight Islām. They are tirelessly trying to destroy the Masājid so that Allāh's remembrance *(Dhikr)* ceases to exist. Jihād will be necessary to defend these Masājid.

Allāh then describes the Muslims who were forced to leave Makkah and were then granted sovereignty. Allāh says, *"These are people who, if We grant them authority on earth, they establish Salāh, pay Zakāh, enjoin good and forbid evil."* This verse applies perfectly to the first four righteous khalifas (*Caliphs*) of Islām.

Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه [*v. 3 p. 226*] reports that Sayyidina Uthman رضى الله عنه said, "This verse applies to myself and my companions, We were expelled from our homes merely because we proclaimed that Allāh is our Lord. Thereafter, Allāh granted us authority and we established Salāh, paid Zakāh, and practised ***(enjoing good and forbidding evil "Amr Bil Ma'rūf Wan Nahy Anil Munkar.")***

The insolence of the Rawāfidh can be clearly seen from the above verse. Whereas Allāh praises the Sahabah رضى الله عنهم, these foolish people claim that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه and the other Sahabah رضى الله عنهم were all disbelievers (*Allāh forbid!*).

It is indeed tragic that the leaders of today do not come close to the above description of leadership. They have no interest in performing Salāh and paying Zakāh. Let alone enjoining good and forbidding evil, they legislate such laws whereby they actually enjoin evil and forbid good. They fear the people and shy away from correcting their irreligious nature.

"The result of all deeds rest with Allāh." Although the Muslims had to suffer initially, they were soon granted sovereignty over the major portion of the Old World. Even today, the Muslims have dominance over a great part of the world. In this world, the true believer *(Mu'min)* will be victorious over the disbelievers and most definitely in the Hereafter.

وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَثَمُودُ ﴿42﴾ وَقَوْمُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَقَوْمُ
لُوطٍ ﴿43﴾ وَأَصْحَـٰبُ مَدْيَنَ ۖ وَكُذِّبَ مُوسَىٰ ۖ فَأَمْلَيْتُ لِلْكَـٰفِرِينَ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ ۖ
فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿44﴾ فَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَـٰهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِىَ
خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَبِئْرٍ مُّعَطَّلَةٍ وَقَصْرٍ مَّشِيدٍ ﴿45﴾ أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ
فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَآ أَوْ ءَاذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۖ فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى ٱلْأَبْصَـٰرُ وَلَـٰكِن
تَعْمَى ٱلْقُلُوبُ ٱلَّتِى فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ ﴿46﴾ وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِٱلْعَذَابِ وَلَن يُخْلِفَ ٱللَّهُ وَعْدَهُۥ ۚ
وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِندَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿47﴾ وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ أَمْلَيْتُ
لَهَا وَهِىَ ظَالِمَةٌ ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهَا وَإِلَىَّ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿48﴾

(42) If they deny you, then the nation of Nūh, the Ād and the Thamud also denied before them... (43) ... as well as the nation of Ibrahīm and the nation of Lūt... (44) .. And the people of Madyan (also denied). Mūsa was also denied, and We granted respite to the disbelievers, after which we seized them. How was My punishment? (45) Many were the towns that We destroyed when they were oppressive. They now lie collapsed upon their roofs, and many are the disused wells and the fortresses that were once well built. (46) Have they not travelled in the land so that they develop hearts to understand and ears to hear? It is really not eyes that become blind, but the hearts that lie in bosoms which become blind. (47) They want to hurry you with the punishment whereas Allāh will never break His promise. Verily a single day with your Lord is like a thousand years according to your count. (48) Many were the towns to which I had granted respite although they were oppressive. Thereafter I seized them, and to Me shall be the return.

THE DESTROYED TOWNS ARE LESSONS FOR OTHERS

Allāh addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"If they deny you, then the nation of Nūh, the Ād* [who denied Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام] *and the Thamud* [who denied Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام] *also denied before them; as well as the nation of Ibrahīm and the nation of Lūt. And the people of Madyan* [who denied Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام]. *Mūsa was also denied..."*

Allāh expresses to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should also be patient like these Prophets عليهم السلام and continue with his mission. However, Allāh say that He *"granted respite to the disbelievers, after which we seized them. How*

was My punishment?".

"Many were the towns that We destroyed when they were oppressive. They (i.e. their ruins) *now lie collapsed upon their roofs..."* The roofs of buildings cave in first. Thereafter the walls collapse upon the roofs.

Allāh continues to say, *"and many are the disused wells and the fortresses that were once well built."* These now stand as useless rubble of no benefit to anyone.

"Have they not travelled in the land (to witness the ruins described above) *so that they develop hearts to understand and ears to hear?"* These people have not taken a lesson from these events and do not respond to the truth. These things are in front of them, yet they fail to perceive them, as if they were blind. Therefore, Allāh says, *"It is really not eyes that become blind, but the hearts that lie in bosoms which become blind."*

"They want to hurry you with the punishment..." They do this with the intention of falsifying the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, when the punishment is not sent immediately upon their request. However, it should be remembered that *"Allāh will never break His promise."* The disbelievers will certainly receive the punishment when Allāh decrees that they should. The punishment cannot arrive before the decreed hour.

"Verily a single day with your Lord is like a thousand years according to your count." If the disbelievers are not punished in this world, they will certainly be punished in the Hereafter, when they will be subjected to the tortures of the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* before actually being sent to Hell. This day will last for a thousand years of the world and the sun will be brought so close to people that the perspiration of some will reach until their mouths, while that of other's will embrace their throats like the reins of an animal.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضى الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The poor will enter Heaven *(Jannah)* 500 years before the rich. This 500 years will be half the duration of the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*." [*Tirmidhi*]

Allāh says in Surah Ma'ārij , *"On a day, the duration of which will be fifty thousand years..."* This verse seems to contradict the view mentioned above (that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will last for a thousand years). In reality there is no discrepancy here. Each person will feel the duration of that day differently. It will appear; to some that it lasts for a thousand years, while others may feel that it is 50,000 years.

Imām Bayhaqi رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضى الله عنه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked, "The day that will last for 50,00 years shall be long indeed (i.e. how will this be tolerated?)" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "By Him in Whose control lies my life! To the believer *(Mu'min)*, this day will seem shorter than the time in which he performs his Fardh Salāh."

When Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضى الله عنه was asked about the verse,. *"On a day, the duration of which will be fifty thousand years,"* he replied by saying, "Allāh knows best. I do not consider it appropriate to comment on something about which I have no knowledge."

As a conclusion and a summary of the above subject matter, Allāh says, *"Many were the towns to which I had granted respite, although they were oppressive. Thereafter I seized them, and to Me shall be the return."*

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا۠ لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿49﴾ فَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ
لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿50﴾ وَٱلَّذِينَ سَعَوْا۟ فِىٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مُعَٰجِزِينَ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلْجَحِيمِ ﴿51﴾

(49) Say, "O people! I am but a clear warner unto you." (50) As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, theirs shall be forgiveness and a bounteous provision. (51) Those who make attempts to subdue Our verses shall be the dwellers of the Inferno.

FORGIVENESS FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND DO GOOD DEEDS, AND PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO REJECT

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Say, 'O people! I am but clear warner unto you."* The duty of the Prophets عليهم السلام was merely to warn people of the consequences of not believing. They were not entrusted with the task of making people accept.

They also came to inform the people that *"As for those who believe and do righteous deeds, theirs shall be forgiveness and a bounteous provision."* In this way they were bearers of glad tidings. However, they also warned people that *"Those who make attempts to subdue Our verses shall be the dwellers of the Inferno."*

This verse refers to those people who attempted to undermine the Qur'ān by telling people that it was magic or poetry. Sometimes they would also tell others that the Qur'ān comprised of mere tales. They did all this so that people become disinclined towards the Qur'ān and Islām.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِىٍّ إِلَّآ إِذَا تَمَنَّىٰٓ أَلْقَى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فِىٓ أُمْنِيَّتِهِۦ
فَيَنسَخُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ ٱللَّهُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿52﴾
لِّيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِى ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ فِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَٱلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ
ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ لَفِى شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿53﴾ وَلِيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ مِن
رَّبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِهِۦ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُۥ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهَادِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ
مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿54﴾ وَلَا يَزَالُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْهُ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَهُمُ ٱلسَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً
أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَقِيمٍ ﴿55﴾ ٱلْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ

(52) It occurred to every messenger and the Holy Prophet whom we sent before you, that whenever he recited, Satan (Shaytān) cast doubts in his recitation. However, Allāh effaces the doubts that Satan (Shaytān) casts and then consolidates His verses. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (53) So that Allāh makes the doubts cast by Satan (Shaytān) a test for those in whose hearts is a disease and for those whose hearts are hard. Indeed, the oppressors are in a far removed disagreement. (54) And so that those granted knowledge should know that it is the truth from your Lord and they believe in it, causing even their hearts to bow. Allāh shall definitely guide the believers to the straight path. (55) The disbelievers will perpetually be in doubt about it, until Judgment day (Qiyāmah) comes to them suddenly or the punishment of such a day comes to them in which there is no good. (56) All sovereignty will belong to Allāh on that day. He will judge between them. Those who believe and perform righteous deeds will be in gardens of bounty. (57) As for those who disbelieve and deny Our verses, theirs shall be a humiliating punishment.

THE PLOTS OF SATAN *(SHAYTĀN)* AGAINST THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام CAUSE THE BELIEVERS TO GROW STRONGER IN THEIR FAITH, AND THE DISBELIEVERS TO FALL DEEPER INTO DOUBT

Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that all the previous Prophets عليهم السلام also suffered the same hindrances that he was suffering. Allāh says. *'It occurred to every messenger and the Prophet whom we sent before you, that whenever he recited* (the revelation), *Satan (Shaytān) cast doubts in* (the hearts of the listeners about) *in his recitation."*

Allāh says in verse 112 of Surah An'ām (*Surah 6*), *"Thus We have appointed for every Prophet an enemy who are devils from humans and Jinn, who whisper to each other things that seem good but are intended to deceive."*

In verse 121 of Surah An'ām Allāh says, *"The Satans (Shayātīn) surely whisper evil into the hearts of their allies so that they dispute with you."*

The Shayātīn and their allies from the human race never accept Islām, nor do they wish others to do so. They therefore continue to sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of others. *"However, Allāh effaces the doubts that Satan (Shaytān) casts and then consolidates His verses. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise."*

These doubts are cast into peoples' hearts, but they have different effects on different people. Allāh says that these are cast *"So that Allāh makes the doubts cast by Satan (Shaytān) a test for those in whose hearts is a disease* (of hypocrisy) *and for those whose hearts are hard* (i.e. the disbelievers). *Indeed, the oppressors* (those who harbour these doubts) *are in a far removed disagreement."* They are obstinate and do not take heed to the truth even when it is before their eyes.

However, Allāh keeps those whom He has guided firm upon their beliefs despite these onslaughts by Satan *(Shaytān)*. Allāh says that these doubts are cast

"so that those granted knowledge should know that it (i.e. the revelation that the Holy Prophet recites) *is the truth from your Lord and they believe in it* (thereby increasing their Belief *(Imān)*), *causing even their hearts to bow. Allāh shall definitely guide the believers to the straight path."*

However, those who refuse to believe stray further away from the truth until they cannot turn back. Allāh says, *"The disbelievers will perpetually be in doubt regarding it, until Judgment day (Qiyāmah) comes to them suddenly or the punishment of such a day comes to them in which there is no good."* When these events occur, it will be too late for them to believe.

"All sovereignty will belong to Allāh on that day (of Judgment (Qiyāmah)). He will judge between them (the Muslims and the disbelievers). *Those who believe and perform righteous deeds will be in gardens of bounty."* On the other hand, *"As for those who disbelieve and deny Our verses, theirs shall be a humiliating punishment."* They will suffer this humiliation because they maintained that adopting Belief *(Imān)* was an act of humiliation, while disbelief was something to be honoured.

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ رِزْقًا
حَسَنًا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ (58) لَيُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ مُدْخَلًا
يَرْضَوْنَهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ (59) ۞ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبَ
بِهِ ثُمَّ بُغِيَ عَلَيْهِ لَيَنْصُرَنَّهُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُورٌ (60)

(58) We shall certainly provide a most splendid provision to those who migrate in Allāh's path and are then martyred or die naturally. Without doubt only Allāh is the Best of providers. (59) He will definitely admit them into a place with which they will be satisfied. Verily Allāh is All Knowing, Forbearing. (60) So be it. And Allāh will surely help the one who is oppressed after he retaliates in proportion to the harm done to him. Verily Allāh is Clement, Most Forgiving.

THE MAGNIFICENT PROVISION FOR THOSE WHO MIGRATE FOR ALLĀH'S PLEASURE

The early Muslims were compelled to migrate from the hometown of Makkah, leaving all their properties and most of their belongings behind. Even the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم migrated to Madinah after a few years. When the Muslims based themselves in Madinah, people from all over Arabia also migrated there with some difficulty.

All these people are promised a great reward from Allāh, especially if they had to be later martyred in Jihād. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"We shall certainly provide a most splendid provision to those who migrate in Allāh's path and are then martyred or die naturally. Without doubt only Allāh is the Best of providers."*

Furthermore Allāh promises these people that *"He will definitely admit them into a place with which they will be satisfied* [i.e. Heaven *(Jannah)*]. *Verily Allāh is All Knowing, Forbearing."* Allāh will punish or reward people according to their

deeds, which He is well aware of. He will not punish them suddenly, but after allowing them some grace to reflect about their situation.

The apparent phrasing of the first of these verses seems to denote that those who are martyred will be granted a reward that is equal to those who die naturally. However, it should be borne in mind that any reward granted by Allāh can fit into the description of *"a most splendid provision,"* even if their rewards differ in proportion.

"So be it." The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" interprets this to mean that the above mentioned details have been decreed.

Thereafter Allāh says, *"And Allāh will surely help the one who is oppressed after he retaliates in proportion to the harm done to him. Verily Allāh is Clement, Most Forgiving."* This verse makes it clear that a person is allowed to retaliate for any harm done to him on condition that the retaliation is in proportion to the original aggression. However, it is best to forgive the aggressor without retaliating. Allāh says in Surah Shura , *"The retribution for an evil is an evil the like thereof. As for the one who pardons and makes amends, his reward will be with Allāh. Verily, Allāh does not like the oppressors."* In verse 43 of the same Surah. Allāh says, *"Whoever will exercise patience and pardon, That will certainly be of the most resolute matters."* [*Surah 42, verse 43*]

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُولِجُ ٱلَّيْلَ فِى ٱلنَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ ٱلنَّهَارَ فِى ٱلَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ
سَمِيعٌۢ بَصِيرٌ ﴿61﴾ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِۦ
هُوَ ٱلْبَٰطِلُ وَأَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿62﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ
مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَتُصْبِحُ ٱلْأَرْضُ مُخْضَرَّةً ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿63﴾ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى
ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ ٱلْغَنِىُّ ٱلْحَمِيدُ ﴿64﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ
ٱللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱلْفُلْكَ تَجْرِى فِى ٱلْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِۦ وَيُمْسِكُ ٱلسَّمَآءَ أَن
تَقَعَ عَلَى ٱلْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ بِٱلنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿65﴾ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ لَكَفُورٌ ﴿66﴾

(61) This is because Allāh certainly enters the night into the day and enters the day into the night. And Allāh is surely All Hearing, All Seeing. (62) This is because only Allāh is the Truth and all that they worship besides Him are false. And Allāh is certainly The Highest, The Greatest. (63) Do you not see that Allāh sends the rains from the skies, causing the earth to flourish with greenery? Verily Allāh is Compassionate, Informed. (64) To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and in the earth. And Allāh is undoubtedly Independent, Worthy of praise. (65) Do you not see that Allāh has subjugated everything on earth for you, as well as the ships that navigate the oceans by His command? And He

restrains the sky from crashing on to the earth without His command. Without doubt, Allāh is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful unto mankind. (66) It is He Who gives you life, then gives you death, after which He will grant you life again. Man is surely an awful ingrate.

THE MANIFESTATION OF ALLĀH'S CREATION, SUBJUGATION AND AUTHORITY

Allāh's assistance to the oppressed person in the previous verse denotes that He possesses supreme control over all affairs, even control over the physical world. Allāh says that He *"enters the night into the day and enters the day into the night. And All is surely All Hearing, All Seeing."*

Allāh exercises this supreme control over His creation *"because only Allāh is the Truth and all that they worship besides Him are false. And Allāh is certainly The Highest, The Greatest."*

Further describing His sovereignty, Allāh says, *"Do you not see that Allāh sends the rains from the skies, causing the earth to flourish with greenery? Verily Allāh is Compassionate, Informed."*

"To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and in the earth. And Allāh is undoubtedly Independent, Worthy of praise. Do you not see that Allāh has subjugated everything on earth for you, as well as the ships that navigate the oceans by His command?" Allāh has placed all of these creations at the service of man.

Even the lofty skies that seem so imposing are at the command of Allāh. Allāh says, *"And He restrains the sky from crashing on to the earth without His command."* If He willed, He could cause the skies to collapse and destroy everything on earth. However, He did not do this because *"Without doubt, Allāh is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful unto mankind."* He is so merciful that He even allows the disbelievers to live and sustains them.

"It is He Who gives you life, then gives you death, after which He will grant you life again." Despite witnessing all these things and benefiting from Allāh's bounties, man is still ungrateful to Allāh. Allāh says, *"Man is surely an awful ingrate."*

لِّكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَٰزِعُنَّكَ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ وَٱدْعُ إِلَىٰ
رَبِّكَ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَإِن جَٰدَلُوكَ فَقُلِ ٱللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
﴿٦٨﴾ ٱللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ فِيمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾ أَلَمْ
تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ فِى كِتَٰبٍ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى
ٱللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

(67) We have ordained rites for every nation, according to which they worship. So they should never dispute with you in these matters. Call unto Allāh, for you are certainly upon the guidance of the straight path. (68) If they argue with you,

then say, "Allāh knows best what you do." (69) "Allāh will decide between you on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) concerning the matters in which you dispute." (70) Do you not know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth? This is all in the Book. This is certainly easy for Allāh.

RITES OF WORSHIP HAVE BEEN ORDAINED FOR EVERY NATION

The Jews and the Christians objected to the religion *(D'īn)* that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم brought. They argued that they did not find any mention of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم teachings in the previous scriptures. They therefore refused to believe in him as a Prophet. Allāh replies to this absurd remark by saying, *"We have ordained rites for every nation, according to which they worship."*

Allāh is the Master of man and reserves the right to ordain different laws and methods of worship for the different nations. Just as Allāh ordained different injunctions for the previous nations, He has instituted a different code of worship for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Allāh then says, *"So they should never dispute with you in these matters."* The Shari'ah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم negated all the previous religion's *(Dīn's)*. The person who raises any objection in this regard against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, is actually objecting to Allāh, because Allāh has ordained all of these.

Allāh then advised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not to fall into disputes with the ignorant but to rather *"Call unto Allāh, for you are certainly upon the guidance of the straight path."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم need not argue with these people because he was already on the correct path of guidance.

"If they argue with you, then say, 'Allāh knows best what you do. Allāh will punish them for their insolence and rejection. Allāh further tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to say to these disbelievers, *"Allāh will decide between you on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah) concerning the matters in which you dispute."* The truth will then be made manifest, but it will be too late to accept. Belief *(Imān)* is only beneficial when adopted in this world, because the believers *(Mu'minīn)* are *"those who believe in the unseen."*

"Do you not know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth? This is all in the Book [the protected tablet (the Lawhul Mahfūz)]. This is certainly easy for Allāh." Recording the details of everything in this universe is no great task for Allāh.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِۦ سُلْطَٰنًا وَمَا لَيْسَ لَهُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۗ وَمَا
لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ ﴿٧١﴾ وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا بَيِّنَٰتٍ تَعْرِفُ فِى وُجُوهِ
ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ٱلْمُنكَرَ ۖ يَكَادُونَ يَسْطُونَ بِٱلَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ

ءَايَـٰتِنَا ۗ قُلْ أَفَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِشَرٍّ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمُ ۗ ٱلنَّارُ وَعَدَهَا ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٢﴾

(71) Besides Allāh, they worship things regarding which Allāh has not revealed any proof, and about which they have no knowledge. The oppressors will have no helper. (72) When Our clear verses are recited to them, you will detect displeasure on the faces of the disbelievers. They could almost attack those reciting Our verses to them. Say, "Should I inform you of something worse than this? The Fire! Allāh has promised it for those who disbelieve. It is a terrible abode indeed."

RESENTMENT CAN BE DETECTED ON THE FACES OF THE DISBELIEVERS WHEN THEY HEAR THE QUR'ĀN

Allāh says about the polytheists, *"Besides Allāh, they worship things regarding which Allāh has not revealed any proof and about which they have no knowledge."* They therefore have no excuse for their practices neither a religious proof, nor a logical proof. They have oppressed themselves by perpetrating polytheism *(shirk)* and should understand that *"The oppressors will have no helper* (against Allāh's punishment)."

"When Our clear verses are recited to them, you will detect displeasure on the faces of the disbelievers. (They become so incensed by the recitation, that) They could almost attack those (Muslims) reciting Our verses to them."

The resentment expressed by the disbelievers is a trivial matter. There are things far worse than this, as Allāh tells the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Say, 'Should I inform you of something worse than this? The Fire! Allāh has promised it for those who disbelieve. It is terrible abode indeed.'"* They will never be able to escape from the fire of Hell. All else pales into insignificance when compared to the horror of Hell. A person should therefore concentrate all his endeavours towards saving himself from Hell.

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَٱسْتَمِعُوا۟ لَهُۥٓ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ لَن يَخْلُقُوا۟ ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ ٱجْتَمَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ ۖ وَإِن يَسْلُبْهُمُ ٱلذُّبَابُ شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۚ ضَعُفَ ٱلطَّالِبُ وَٱلْمَطْلُوبُ ﴿٧٣﴾ مَا قَدَرُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَقَوِىٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

(73) O people! A similitude has been coined, so listen attentively to it. Indeed those whom you worship besides Allāh can never even create a fly, though all of them join forces in this effort. If a fly has to steal anything from them, they cannot retrieve it. The seeker and the sought are both weak. (74) They have not honoured Allāh as He deserves to be honoured. Allāh is surely the Omnipotent, the Mighty.

THE HELPLESSNESS OF ALL FALSE GODS

In the above verse, Allāh depicts the foolishness of the polytheists in a very effectual manner. Allāh says, *"O people! A similitude has been coined, so listen attentively to it. Indeed those who you worship besides Allāh can never even create a fly; though all of them join forces in this effort."* It is therefore foolish to worship them when their combined power cannot even come near to matching Allāh's awesome powers.

"If a fly has to steal anything from them, they cannot retrieve it." The polytheists used to rub saffron on the bodies of their idols and honey on their heads. Flies used to come through the vents and eat up all the honey. The idols were, of course unable to prevent this. Even today, the Hindus place sweetmeats and other offerings before their idols only for the flies and other insects to enjoy.

However, despite realising the helplessness of their false gods, these people do not desist from their ways. They continue to be subservient to and worship things that are weaker than themselves.

"The seeker (the Polytheist) *and the sought* (the idol) *are both weak."* The weakness of the idol is apparent and has been explained in the above verses. The polytheist worshipper of these idols is weak because he cannot utilise his intelligence to fathom the absurdity of his deeds.

"They have not honoured Allāh as He deserves to be honoured." Allāh is the Only Being Who is worthy of worship because He is the Only One Who is Able to do everything and anything. It is incumbent on man to realise that only Allāh should be worshipped, and he must accept and believe in all Allāh's attributes that are mentioned in the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth,

Taking others as deities will constitute dishonouring Allāh. The polytheists also admit to accepting Allāh as their Lord, but still worship others at the same time. This is also against the honour of Allāh especially when they sacrifice animals in the name of these idols.

"Allāh is surely The Omnipotent, the Mighty." How can one worship helpless and weak gods instead of One Who is "The Omnipotent, the Mighty"

ٱللَّهُ يَصۡطَفِي مِنَ ٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلٗا وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعُۢ بَصِيرٞ
(75) يَعۡلَمُ مَا بَيۡنَ أَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَمَا خَلۡفَهُمۡۗ وَإِلَى ٱللَّهِ تُرۡجَعُ ٱلۡأُمُورُ (76) يَٰٓأَيُّهَا
ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱرۡكَعُواْ وَٱسۡجُدُواْ وَٱعۡبُدُواْ رَبَّكُمۡ وَٱفۡعَلُواْ ٱلۡخَيۡرَ
لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ ۩ (77)

(75) Allāh selects messengers from the angels and from mankind. Verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing. (76) He knows what is before them and what is behind them. All matters return to Allāh. (77) O you who believe, bow, prostrate, worship your Lord and carry out good deeds so that you may be successful.

ALLĀH CHOOSES MESSENGERS FROM AMONG THE ANGELS AND MEN

All of creation has been created by Allāh. Therefore, He reserves the right to grant status to whomsoever He desires. Allāh has conferred the noble mantle of apostleship to those angels and men whom He has chosen. None has the right to question Allāh about His reasons for selecting someone and omitting another, for *"Verily Allāh is All Hearing, All Seeing."* Allāh knows best who can bear the responsibility and who cannot.

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them." Allāh is Aware of every person's past, present and future situations. *"All matters return to Allāh."* He has supreme control over all matters in both the worlds. Nothing happens without His will.

Allāh then says, *"O you who believe, bow, prostrate* (i.e. perform Salāh, which includes these postures), *worship your Lord* (by carrying out all other acts of devotion) *and carry out good deeds* (the Faraidh, Compulsories, Optional, good character, etc) *so that you may be successful."*

According to Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, this verse requires that a person makes prostration *(Sajdah)*. However, Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه and Imām Mālik رحمة الله عليه are of the opinion that prostration *(Sajdah)* does not have to made. The details of this difference are mentioned in the books of jurisprudence and commentaries of the Ahadīth.

وَجَٰهِدُوا۟ فِى ٱللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِۦ ۚ هُوَ ٱجْتَبَىٰكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِى ٱلدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّىٰكُمُ ٱلْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن قَبْلُ وَفِى هَٰذَا لِيَكُونَ ٱلرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا۟ شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى ٱلنَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِيمُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتُوا۟ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَٱعْتَصِمُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَىٰكُمْ ۖ فَنِعْمَ ٱلْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ ٱلنَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

(78) Strive for Allāh with the endeavour that is His right. He has chosen you and has not placed any hardship upon you in religion (Dīn). Follow the creed of your father Ibrahīm. It was Allāh who named you Muslims from before and in this Qur'ān, so that the messenger be a witness over you, and that you may be witnesses over mankind. So establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and hold fast to Allāh. He is your Protecting Friend. The Best Protecting Friend and the Best Helper.

STRIVE IN ALLĀH'S WAY AS ONE SHOULD AND FOLLOW THE CREED OF SAYYIDINA IBRAHĪM عليه السلام

The Arabic word "Jihād" (translated above as *"Strive"*) literally includes all endeavours that are carried out to please Allāh. The 'Jihād' (holy war) that is commonly referred to is a branch of the broader literal meaning. The carnal soul of a person has to be subdued when a person wishes to carry out good deeds and to abstain from sin. The carnal soul also has to be fought to rectify one's intentions when carrying out these deeds so that they are not done for ulterior

motives. Striving to curb these desires of the soul may also be termed as Jihād.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the Muslims should wage Jihād against the polytheists with their wealth, lives and tongues. Therefore, Jihād will include spending one's wealth against the disbelievers and even (if need be) the usage of poetry to reply to their vilifying poetry against Islām and the Muslims. Writing books on Islām to combat them and to preach Islām will also be included in the purport of *"Strive for Allāh with the endeavour that is His right."* In fact, any endeavour for the benefit of religion *(D'īn)* will be included in the meaning of this verse.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, *"The best Jihād is to speak a word of truth before a tyrannical king."* There are various ranks of Jihād, all of which vary in the rewards that they will earn the believer *(Mu'min).*

Allāh then says, *"He* (Allāh) *has chosen you... "* Allāh has granted preference to the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم over all other followers *(Ummahs).* He has conferred the Qur'ān on them, which can easily be committed to memory. Although they are the last of all Ummahs to appear on earth, they will be the first to enter Heaven *(Jannah).*

Tirmidhi reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verse, *"You are the best of all nations who have been raised for mankind."* Thereafter, he said, *"You have completed the 70th Ummah. You are the best of nations and the most honoured in the sight of Allāh."*

THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY IN RELIGION *(D'ĪN)*

"....and has not placed any hardship upon you in religion (Dīn)."It is also because of the bounties of Allāh on this Ummah that He has made the religion *(D'īn)* of Islām easy to follow. None of the injunctions are impossible to follow and are all perfectly applicable to their individual situations. This religion *(D'īn)* does not have the difficult injunctions that was ordained in the religion *(D'īn)*of the Jews, as discussed in the commentary of the last verse (*verse 286*) of Surah Baqarah, which reads, *"Our Lord, do not place such a burden on us as You had placed on those before us."*

Many pure things were forbidden for the Jews and they could not also claim the booty from their wars. They had to pay a quarter of their wealth in Zakāh and had to cut off that portion of their clothes that became contaminated with any impurity. Merely washing the impure portion was not sufficient. Whenever any of them secretly perpetrated a sin at night, it would be emblazoned on his door the following morning.

Booty has been permitted for the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and they have to pay only 2.5% of their wealth annually in Zakāh. Then too, Zakāh is not payable on all their wealth - only on gold, silver, cash and merchandise, even though the person may be a millionaire.

Although fasting has been ordained during the month of Ramadhān, it is waived for the ill and the traveller. They may observe their missed fasts after Ramadhān, while the extremely frail person may pay expiation for it. Hajj is obligatory only once in a lifetime for those who are financially capable.

Even the five daily Salāh have been made easy because the entire period between Fajr and Zuhr, as well as the period between Zuhr and Asr have been kept free of any other Salāh so that people could easily engage in earning their living or studying. The lengthy period from Isha to Fajr has also been freed for rest.

The total number of Rakāhs throughout the day (the obligatory prayer *(Farāidh),* Witr and Sunan Mu'akkada) comprise only 32 Rakāhs, and it is reduced further for the traveller, when the obligatory prayer *(Farāidh)* are lessened to only two Rakāhs instead of four. When a person is unable to stand in Salāh, he may sit and, if he cannot even sit, he may lie down and perform Salāh.

Ablution *(Wudhu)* and Bath *(Ghusl)* will earn a person extra reward if made with cold water and, when water is not available or cannot be used, one may perform the Dry ablution *(Tayammum).* Pure foods can be consumed and man has only been prevented from eating unlawful foods that may adversely affect his character.

Fighting in Jihād is obligatory on every Muslim only when the disbelievers attack and the army cannot cope. Then too, it will serve to protect the lives and property of the Muslims themselves. If a Muslim is killed in the battle, he is promised the lofty mantle of martyrdom, which cannot be matched with thousands of years in worship.

It should be borne in mind that the meaning of an easy religion *(D'īn)* is not that a person will not feel any difficulty at all in practising, nor does it mean that he can consume anything that he pleases. If this were so then the Fajr Salāh would have never been made Fardh because of the difficulty involved in awakening. Similarly, Asr Salāh would not have been made Fardh, because of the difficulty involved in forsaking business at that time. If this were the case, then the details of lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām)* would have been meaningless.

The meaning of a simple religion *(D'īn)* is that it is practicable for any person once he decides to practise. Today's times have bred ignoramuses who claim to be jurists. Saying that religion *(D'īn)* is simple, they have permitted explicit sins like usury, gambling, Unlawful *(Harām)* meat, etc. They are misled and are misleading others by their foolish rulings. People should understand that these people are actually their enemies, and should remain far from them.

Allāh continues to say; *"Follow the creed of your father Ibrahīm."* Since the Arabs were from the progeny of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام, Allāh uses that words *"your father."* The foundation pillar of Sayyidina Ibrahīm's عليه السلام creed was Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd).* There are also many other similarities between the Islām preached by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Religion *(Dīn)* followed by Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام.

"It was Allāh who named you Muslims from before (i.e. in the previous scriptures) *and in this Qur'ān..."* An example of this in the Qur'ān is verse 102 of Surah Āl Imrān (Surah 3), where Allāh says, *"O you who believe, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims."* One cannot truly thank Allāh enough for this title, because it describes this Ummah as people who are truly

submissive to Allāh.

Other commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام gave this Ummah the name of Muslim. This has been mentioned in verse 128 of Surah Baqarah, where Allāh quotes the prayer *(du'ā)* of Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and Sayyidina Isma'īl عليه السلام. They submitted, *"O our Lord! Make the two of us submissive to You and make from our progeny a nation who are Muslims (submissive to You)."*

Allāh then says that Muslims should strive in Allāh's way *"so that the messenger may be a witness over you, and that you be witnesses over mankind."*

Other commentators interpret the verse to mean that since Allāh has given this Ummah the title of Muslim, they should value this title and act accordingly, by being submissive to all Allāh's commands. The verse therefore means that Allāh gave them the title, *"so that* (you become worthy enough for) *the messenger* (to) *be a witness over you, and (worthy enough) that you may be witnesses over mankind."*

Allāh says in verse 142 of Surah Baqarah, *"Thus we have made you such a group that is moderate in nature so that you may be witness over the people and the messenger a witness over you."*

When Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام and other Prophets عليهم السلام will attest that they have propagated their messages to the people, they will be required to present witnesses. They will summon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah. The Ummah will then attest to the veracity of these Prophets عليهم السلام. When they will be asked as to how they had knowledge of this fact, they will say that their Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had informed them of the same.

Once Allāh has bestowed this Ummah with this great position of being witnesses to the testimony of the Prophets عليهم السلام, they need to express gratitude and live up to the status. To fulfil this, Allāh commands, *"So establish Salāh, pay Zakāh* (both of which are amomg the greater fundamentals of Islām) *and hold fast to Allāh."* i.e. Only Allāh must be relied on and beseeched for assistance.

"He is your Protecting Friend. The Best Protecting Friend and the Best Helper." The word *"mawla"* (translated above as "Protecting Friend") also refers to someone who facilitates one's tasks and affairs.

Allāh says in another verse, *"This is because Allāh is the Protecting Friend of the believers and because the disbelievers have no protecting friend."*

PART EIGHTEEN

سورة المؤمنون

Makkan	Surah Al-Muminun	Verses 118

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (1) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (2) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (3) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (4) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (5) إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (6) فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (7) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (8) وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ (9) أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (10) الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (11)

In the name of Allāh, Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) The believers have truly succeeded... (2) ... those who are humble in their Salāh... (3) ... who are averse to futility... (4) .... who fulfil the act of paying Zakāh... (5).... and those who safeguard their private organs... (6). .. save when it comes to their spouses and the slave women whom they own. They will surely not be blamed about (cohabiting with) them. (7) Whoever seeks more than this, then such persons are transgressors indeed. (8) Those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges... (9) And those who are particular about their prayers. (10) These are the heirs... (11) ... who shall inherit Firdous, in which they shall abide forever.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE BELIEVERS AND THE DECLARATION OF THEIR SUCCESS

Allāh begins a detailed description of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* by saying, *"The believers have truly succeeded..."* This opening verse refutes that belief of those who think that success can be determined by obtaining the things of this world.

Some think that wealth denotes success, others are under the misconception that social standing represents the degree of success, and there are also those who maintain that physical beauty or a particular profession are tokens of success. Allāh refutes all of this by declaring that true success is measured by one's success in the Hereafter.

Allāh say in another verse, *"Whoever is saved from the fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful."* [*Surah Āl Imrān (3). verse 185*]

Thereafter, Allāh goes on to enumerate the qualities of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Allāh says that they are *"Those who are humble in their Salāh..."* The internal and external dimensions of a believer *(Mu'min)* should be focussed on his Salāh when he is performing it. He should be fully aware of what he is doing and must realise that his Salāh should be worthy of acceptance by Allāh.

He should not be hasty in his Salāh, nor must he fidget with his clothing or beard. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said about a person who was fondling his beard in Salāh, *"if his heart was submissive (to the Shari'ah), his limbs would also be submissive."*

The person performing Salāh is present in Allāh's court and should therefore concentrate properly. It is for this reason that the Shari'ah has encouraged the performance of Salāh behind a screen of some sort. Looking around in Salāh has been forbidden, as well as interlocking the fingers. The Shari'ah has also forbidden the performance of Salāh while one needs to relieve oneself, or is famished and food has been prepared. All these factors disrupt his concentration.

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's attention is constantly directed towards His slave performing Salāh as long as the slave does not divert his attention. When he diverts his attention, then Allāh also diverts His attention." [*Mishkāt p. 91*]

Sayyidina Abu Dharr رضي الله عنه has also reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the person performing Salāh should not fidget with pebbles because Allāh's mercy is directed towards him.

Allāh then describes the second attribute of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*, when He says that they are those *"who are averse to futility..."* The word *'futility"* refers to all deeds and words that are of no benefit in this world and in the Hereafter. Describing a group perform believers *(Mu'minīn)* in Surah Qasas Allāh says, *"When they hear futility, they turn away from it saying, 'Our deeds are ours and your deeds are yours. We greet you with peace. We do not wish to converse with the ignorant."* [*Surah 28, verse 55*]

Speaking of His special bondsmen, Allāh says in Surah Furqān that they are *"those who do not present themselves for acts of deceit and, when they pass by frivolous acts, they pass by gracefully."* [*Surah 25, verse 72*]

One can well imagine that if such emphasis is placed upon being averse to futility, aversion from sin should be stressed much more. Although it would not be sinful to listen to futile talk, such an act will cause the heart to lose its spiritual radiance and will decrease one's desire to perform good deeds. When a person

becomes accustomed to futility, it leads him on to perpetrate sins. Another great harm of futile deeds and talks is that they while away valuable time that could have been fruitfully utilised for noble deeds like the recitation of the Qur'ān and remembrance of Allāh *(Dhikr)*.

Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه has reported that when a certain Sahabi رضي الله عنه passed away, another said that the deceased will enter Heaven *(Jannah)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "You are conveying glad tidings of Heaven *(Jannah)* whereas it is possible that he may have engaged in idle talk or had been niggardly to spend in a cause that would not have brought him any deficiency (like a pinch of salt, imparting some knowledge, a light to make a fire, etc)." [*Mishkāt p. 413*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, *"Avoiding futility is from the beauty of one's Islām."*

A person once asked Sayyidina Luqman عليه السلام how he had attained the noble position that he enjoyed. The sage replied, "By truthful speech, fulfilling the trusts placed with me and by avoiding everything futile."

Allāh then describes the third attribute of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* when He says that they are those *"who fulfil the act of paying Zakāh..."* The literal meaning of the word *"Zakāh"* is 'to purify.' The payment of poor due has been termed "Zakāh" because by paying this figure, people are purified from miserliness and their wealth is also purified. Taking the literal meaning into account, certain commentators have interpreted the above verse to mean that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* are those people who purify themselves from evil traits and habits like hatred, jealousy, etc.

Allāh says in Surah A'la, *"Those who purify themselves have certainly succeeded."* [*Surah 87, verse 14*]

Allāh then enumerates the fourth quality of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* by saying that they are those *"who safeguard their private organs, save when it comes to their spouses and the slave women who they own. They will surely not be blamed with regard to (cohabiting with) them."* Men are permitted to cohabit only with their wives and slave women —none else. Allāh says further, *"Whoever seeks more than this, then such persons are transgressors indeed."*

This verse clearly indicates that the practice of Mut'ah (practiced by the Rawāfidh) is Unlawful *(Harām)* because the woman with whom Mut'ah is practised is neither a person's wife, nor his slave. In a like manner, the verse prohibits all other methods of sexual gratification that do not fall into the purport of *"spouses and slave women."*

The detailed laws pertaining to slave women can be found in the books of jurisprudence. It should be borne in mind that servants and employed labourers are not slaves. Any contact with them will be regarded as fornication by the Shari'ah. Buying or selling a free woman will be Unlawful *(Harām)* for both contracting parties.

Ruling: It is Unlawful *(Harām)* to cohabit with a "mahrām" even if a person marries her.

Ruling: It is Unlawful *(Harām)* to cohabit with one's legal wife and slave girl when they are menstruating. This act will also be deemed as being in the purport of *"Whomsoever seeks more than this, then such persons are transgressors indeed."*

Enumerating the fifth and sixth attributes of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says, *"Those who give due regard to trusts and their pledges. And those who are particular about their prayers."*

Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم seldom delivered a sermon without adding, "Be aware! The person bereft of trustworthiness has no Belief *(Imān)*, and the person who does not fulfil pledges has no Dīn!" [*Mishkāt p. 15*]

Also included in giving *"due regard to trusts"* is to fulfil the commands of Allāh [be these the obligations *(Farāidh)*, Compulsories, etc] and to abstain from the prohibitions [and reprehensibles *(Makrūhāt)*] set by Him. The trusts given to a person by another should also be duly returned and secrets should be safeguarded in a similar responsible manner.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, *"Gatherings are trusts (i.e. the things mentioned in a gathering should be restricted to its venue), unless they concern the unwarranted spilling of blood, fornication, or usurping someone's wealth."*

Another hadith states that when a person says something and then looks about (to see that no other person is listening), then his words are a secret (and should be treated as such). [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "It is a great betrayal that you tell your brother something about which he deems you to be truthful, whereas you are lying." [*Mishkāt*]

A hadith of Tirmidhi reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a person who is consulted in any matter should be trustworthy (i.e. he should offer advice that is best)."

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a hypocrite can be recognised by three traits even though he performs Salāh, fasts and claims to be a Muslim. These are (1) he lies when he speaks, (2) he breaches his pledges and (3) betrays a trust kept with him.

By accepting Islām, the Muslim has undertaken a pledge with Allāh to fulfil all His commands and obey Him in every condition. A person must also fulfil any pledge or promise made to any other person. People are daily involved in the despicable deed of promising payment for debts on certain dates, but then delaying the payment. Even worse are those who defer paying their debts despite having the means to do so.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The person possessing four traits is a true hypocrite, and whoever has one of these four possesses one trait of a hypocrite. (These are:) (1) He fails to return the trust placed in his custody, (2) he lies when he speaks, (3) he betrays after making pledges, (4) he swears when arguing." [*Bukhari and Muslim*]

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله

عليه وسلم said, "If you guarantee six things for me, I shall guarantee Heaven *(Jannah)* for you. (viz.) (1) Speaking the truth, (2) fulfilling promises, (3) returning trusts placed in your care, (4) safeguarding your private organs, *(5)* lowering your gazes [so that they do not fall on Unlawful *(Harām)* things] (6) restraining your hands (from evil and futile activities)." [*Mishkāt p. 415*]

The sixth attribute of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)* is that they are *"particular about their prayers."* People who perform some of their Salāh and discard the rest are not included in this verse.

Sayyidina Ubadah bin Sāmit رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh has ordained five Salāh. Whoever will perform a proper ablution *(wudhu)*, perform them on time with proper performance of the genuflexion *(Ruku)* and prostration *(Sajdah)*, Allāh undertakes to forgive him. Whoever does not do so shall have no such undertaking from Allāh. If Allāh wills, He will forgive him, otherwise Allāh will punish whoever He wills." [*Abu Dawūd*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Amr رضي الله عنه reports that once, while making mention of Salāh, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Salāh will be an illumination on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* for the person who is particular about them. It will also be a proof of his Belief *(Imān)* and a means of delivery from Hell. As for the one who was not particular about Salāh, it will neither be an illumination, nor a proof, nor a means of delivery. On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, such a person will be raised with the likes of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, Hāmān and Ubay bin Khalaf." [*Dārmi v. 2 p. 21 1 and Mishkāt*]

After describing the attributes of the Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, Allāh says about them, *"These are the heirs who shall inherit Firdous, in which they shall abide forever."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Whenever you pray, ask Allāh for Firdous because it is the best and highest level of Heaven *(Jannah)*. Above it is the throne of the Merciful, and all four rivers of Heaven *(Jannah)* have their sources there." [*Bukhari*]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ﴿12﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ﴿13﴾ ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿14﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُم بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ ﴿15﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ ﴿16﴾

(12) We have certainly created man from a product of clay... (13) Thereafter We placed him in a safe lodging as a drop of fluid... (14) Thereafter We made the drop of fluid into a clot of blood, then the clot of blood into a lump of flesh, then the lump of flesh into bones, after which We dressed the bones in flesh. Thereafter We made him into another type of creation. So Blessed be Allāh, the Best of all creators. (15) Thereafter you will all definitely die. (16) Thereafter you will surely be resurrected on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah).

ALLĀH'S CREATIVE POWERS, THE GRADUAL CREATION OF MAN AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

In the above verses, Allāh discusses the fact that man will have to leave this temporary world and be raised for questioning on the Day of Judgement. Referring to the creation of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام, Allāh says, *"We have certainly created man from a product of clay..."*

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه narrates from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh took a handful of sand from all over the earth and mixed it with water so that it became mud. Allāh then cast the mould of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام from this mud. Allāh then blew the soul into it. The progeny of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام will therefore be like the portion of sand they were created from. Among them are reddish people, white people, black people and others between these complexions. Some of them are soft, others hard, some good, others bad (according to the type of sand). [*Tirmidhi and Abu Dawūd, from Mishkāt p.* 22]

'Thereafter We placed him (man) in a safe lodging (the womb) as a drop of fluid. Thereafter We made the drop of fluid into a clot of blood, then (after a while) the clot of blood into a lump of flesh, then (after a period) the lump of flesh into bones, after which We dressed the bones in flesh." Then Allāh placed the soul into this body and caused the child to be born with all its limbs intact—completely different to what it had been initially. Referring to this, Allāh Says, *"Thereafter We made him into another' type of creation."*

"So Blessed be Allāh, the Best of all creators." All the others are also Allāh's creation. They are all only capable of achieving what Allāh allows them to Allāh granted people the intelligence to invent and design things.

Allāh then draws man's attention to the most pertinent fact when He says, *"Thereafter you will all definitely die. Thereafter you will surely be resurrected on the Day of Judgment (Qiyāmah)."*

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَآئِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ ٱلْخَلْقِ غَٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ
مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّٰهُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍۭ بِهِۦ لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُم بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٍ
مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَٰبٍ لَّكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَٰكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن
طُورِ سَيْنَآءَ تَنۢبُتُ بِٱلدُّهْنِ وَصِبْغٍ لِّلْءَاكِلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

(17) We have certainly created seven paths above you and we are never unaware of the creation. (18) We send stipulated quantities of water from the skies, embedding it into the earth, and We are also capable of withdrawing it. (19) Therewith We create for you gardens of date palms and grapes. In them is an abundance of fruit for you, and you also eat from them. (20) We have also created a certain tree that grows from the mountain of Sinai, bearing oil and gravy for those who wish to eat.

THE CREATION OF THE SKIES AND THE FALLING OF RAIN IN SPECIFIED QUANTITIES, CAUSING VARIOUS THINGS TO GROW IN GARDENS

Allāh says, *"We have certainly created seven paths above you..."* This refers to the seven skies. They are referred to as *"paths"* because they are stacked one upon the other, leading upwards from the earth. They may also be referred to as *"paths"* because the angels traverse them in their ascent to the heavens.

"..... and we are never unaware of the creation." Allāh ever always Aware of all His creation, be they tiny or colossal.

"We send stipulated quantities of water from the skies..." If too much rain falls, floods occur, causing extensive damage to man and animals alike. If the rains are too little, they also suffer just as much. Allāh causes the rains to fall in sufficient quantities so that people are able to fulfil their needs. At the same time, the rainwater does not disappear after falling but is absorbed into the earth to be used when the need arises. It is also stored in rivers and dams for man's benefit. Allāh refers to this when he says that He embeds the water *"into the earth."*

However, just as Allāh can send rain to man, it should be borne in mind that He is perfectly *"capable of withdrawing it."*

Allāh then says that, by means of the rain, He creates for people *"gardens of date palms and grapes. In them is an abundance of fruit for you, and you also eat from them."* These are some of the various benefits of the vegetation that Allāh allows to grow. These fruit are both nutritious and tasty, requiring no additives to improve their taste. They may also be preserved and dried until the next season.

"We have also created a certain tree that grows from the mountain of Sinai, bearing oil and gravy for those who wish to eat." This verse refers to the olive tree. It has been referred to as a "blessed tree" in Surah Nūr, and Allāh has taken an oath by the olive in Surah Tīn.

Of the numerous benefits of this tree, the verse mentions two. The first is that the oil may be utilised for a multitude of purposes, and the second is that it may also be eaten as gravy with bread. The olive itself may be consumed. Because olives grow mainly in Shām, the verse says that the olive tree *"grows from the mountain of Sinai* (which is in Shām)." This is the mountain where Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام saw the fire when he was travelling from Madyan to Egypt.

Surah Tīn states the name of this mountain as the *"Mountain of Sinīn,"* whereas the above verse terms it as the mountain of *"Sīnā."* Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that both words mean *"blessed,"* while Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه says that they mean *"beautiful."*

Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has also mentioned that the word *"Sīnā"* could refer to the special rocks of Mount Tūr. Sayyidina Ikramah رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that *"Sīnā"* is the place where Mount Tūr is situated.

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا
تَأْكُلُونَ (21) وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ (22)

(21) There is certainly a lesson for you in the animals. We give you a drink from, their bellies, there are many benefits for you in them, and you even eat of them. (22) You are even carried on them and on ships.

THE BENEFITS OF ANIMALS AND THE ADVANTAGE OF SHIPS

After discussing the benefits of trees, Allāh now makes reference to the multitude of benefits to be found in domesticated farm animals. People drink the milk they produce, eat their meat, make various things from their hides and use them for transport. They have proceeded from the earliest times, just as man has passed through the generations. Allāh has subjugated them for man's benefit.

Allāh then speaks of the ships that man uses to travel over the oceans. Man is transported in them, and his goods are also carried over vast distances. Allāh had inspired man to construct these large ships and allows them to travel on the water despite their bulk. One may refer to the commentary of verse 164 of Surah Baqarah for more details.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا
تَتَّقُونَ (23) فَقَالَ الْمَلَؤُا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ
يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْزَلَ مَلَٰئِكَةً مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي ءَابَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ
(24) إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ فَتَرَبَّصُوا بِهِ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ (25) قَالَ رَبِّ انْصُرْنِي بِمَا
كَذَّبُونِ (26) فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنِ اصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا
وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ
عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تُخَٰطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُغْرَقُونَ (27) فَإِذَا اسْتَوَيْتَ
أَنْتَ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلْكِ فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّىٰنَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّٰلِمِينَ (28) وَقُلْ رَبِّ
أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبَارَكًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ (29) إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ (30)

(23) We sent Nūh to his nation and he told them, "O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do you not fear?" (24) The disbelieving leaders from his nation said, "He is only a human like yourselves, who intends to gain superiority over you. If Allāh desired, He would have rather sent angels. We have not heard of such a thing among our forefathers." (25) "He is but a man afflicted by insanity. So tarry with him a while longer." (26) Nūh عليه السلام

said, "O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me." (27) So We sent revelation to him saying, "Construct an ark by Our supervision and revelation. When Our command comes and water gushes forth from the oven, then admit into the ark a pair of every species and your family, except those against whom the decree has been passed. And do not entreat me about those who oppress. They will be drowned." (28) "When you and those with you have boarded the ark, then say, 'All praise be to Allāh, Who has rescued us from the oppressive nation. (29) And say, 'O my Lord! Settle me in a blessed settlement. You are surely the Best of hosts. (30) There are undoubtedly signs in this, and We certainly put people to the test.

SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام PREACHED ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)* TO HIS NATION, BUT THEY ARE EVENTUALLY DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THEIR DISOBE DIENCE

The nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام worshipped idols, the names of which are mentioned in Surah Nūh. He preached Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* to them, as Allāh says, *"We sent Nūh to his nation and he told them, 'O my people! Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do you not fear (His punishment)?"'*

The leaders of nations are always reluctant to accept the truth and do not even allow others to do so. The leaders of Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام nation were the same and told the people that they saw nothing special in Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام that makes him a Prophet of Allāh. Allāh says, *"The disbelieving leaders from his nation said, 'He is only a human like yourselves, who intends to gain superiority over you. If Allāh* (really) *desired* (to send a Prophet), *He would have rather sent angels* (as the Holy Prophets). *We have not heard of such a thing* (such as worshipping one Allāh) *among our forefathers."*

These leaders were even insolent enough to add, *"He is but a man afflicted by insanity. So tarry with him a while longer* (then we shall see what happens. Either his insanity will vanish, or we will be rid of him upon his death)."

In the face of all this opposition, *"Nūh عليه السلام said, 'O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me.' So We sent revelation to him saying, 'Construct an ark by Our supervision and revelation. When Our command comes and water gushes forth from the oven, then admit into the ark a pair of every species and your family* (as well as all the other believers), *except those against whom the decree* (of punishment) has been passed. *And do not entreat me about those who oppress."* Allāh commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام not to intercede on behalf of those members of his family (viz, his wife and son) who remained disbelievers because *"They will be drowned."*

Allāh commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام to take along a pair of each species of creation so that their progenies may continue after the flood.

Allāh also commanded Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام saying, *"When you and those with you have boarded the ark, then say, 'All praise be to Allāh, Who has rescued us from the oppressive nation.' And say, 'O my Lord! Settle me in a blessed settlement. You are surely the Best of hosts."'*

A verse of Surah Hūd states that as they boarded the ark, they were commanded to recite. *"With the name of Allāh shall it travel and anchor. Surely my*

Lord is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful." They were to recite these prayers as the ark cruised upon the waters.

The sign that signified the beginning of the floods was that water began to gush forth from an oven. Thereafter, water poured from the skies and the earth. All the disbelievers were drowned, and Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام was saved with the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. The details of this epic have been given in Surah Hūd [Sarah 11, verse 25-49].

After describing this episode, Allāh says, *"There are undoubtedly signs in this* (denoting Allāh's immense power), *and We certinly put people to the test."* The people of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام were tested when he preached to them for 950 years. They failed miserably when they opted for the life of this world and followed their leaders instead.

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿31﴾ فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ أَنِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَـٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥٓ ۖ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿32﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِهِ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ وَكَذَّبُوا۟ بِلِقَآءِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَـٰهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا مَا هَـٰذَآ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿33﴾ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُم بَشَرًا مِّثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّخَـٰسِرُونَ ﴿34﴾ أَيَعِدُكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمْ وَكُنتُمْ تُرَابًا وَعِظَـٰمًا أَنَّكُم مُّخْرَجُونَ ﴿35﴾ ۞ هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿36﴾ إِنْ هِىَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا ٱلدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿37﴾ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ ٱفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ كَذِبًا وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُۥ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿38﴾ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱنصُرْنِى بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ﴿39﴾ قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَّيُصْبِحُنَّ نَـٰدِمِينَ ﴿40﴾ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ بِٱلْحَقِّ فَجَعَلْنَـٰهُمْ غُثَآءً ۚ فَبُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ ٱلظَّـٰلِمِينَ ﴿41﴾

(31) Then We created another nation after them. (32) We sent a messenger among them (who told them), "Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do you not fear?" (33) The disbelieving leaders from his nation, who denied the meeting of the Hereafter and whom We had granted affluence in the worldly life, said, "He is merely a human like your selves, who eats what you eat and drinks what you drink." (34) "Surely, if you follow a human like yourselves, you will certainly be at a loss." (35) "Does he promise you that you will be resurrected after you have died and become dust and bones?" (36) Farfetched! Farfetched is that which you are promised!" (37) "This is but our worldly existence. We die and live, and will never be resurrected." (38) "He is only a man who invents lies against Allāh, and we shall never believe him." (39) The messenger said, "O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me. (40) Allāh said, "Shortly these people will regret." (41) So, according to the true promise, a dreadful scream seized them and We reduced them to nothing. May the oppressive nation be far removed!

ANOTHER PROPHET عليه السلام IS SENT AFTER SAYYIDINA NŪH عليه السلام, BUT HIS NATION IS ALSO DESTROYED BECAUSE OF THEIR DISBELIEF

Commentators mention that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم referred to in the above verses is either Sayyidina Hūd or Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام. However, he is most likely to be Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام because Surah A'rāf, Surah Hūd and Surah Shu'arā all make mention of Sayyidina Hūd عليه السلام and his nation (the Ād) after Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. However, he could also be Sayyidina Sālih عليه السلام because his nation was also destroyed by a scream, as mentioned in the above verses. Allāh knows best.

Allāh says, *"Their We created another nation after them [the nation of Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام]. "We sent a messenger among them (who told them), 'Worship Allāh. There is no deity for you besides Him. Do you not fear (that you will be punished on account of your disbelief)?"'*

However, as occurred before, *"The disbelieving leaders from his nation, who denied the meeting of the Hereafter and whom We had granted affluence in the worldly life, said, 'He is merely a human like yourselves, who eats what you eat and drinks what you drink."*

They added, *"Surely, if you follow a human like yourselves, you will certainly be at a loss."* They then attempted to convince the people that the messenger must be insane because of the seemingly ludicrous statements Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام makes. Therefore, they said, *"Does he promise you that you will be resurrected after you have died and become dust and bones? Farfetched! Farfetched is that which you are promised!"*

Expressing their own opinions of disbeliefs, they said, *"This is but our worldly existence. We die and live, and will never be resurrected.* (This has always been the system of this world). *He is only a man who invents lies against Allāh* (by claiming that Allāh made him a Prophet), *and we shall never believe him."*

After repeated efforts to convince the people, the messenger finally made the same supplication made earlier by Sayyidina Nūh عليه السلام. He said, *"O my Lord! Assist me, for they have denied me."*

Allāh responded to his plea by saying, *"Shortly these people will regret."* Allāh's promise to His messengers has always been true. Therefore, Allāh says, *"So, according to the true promise, a dreadful scream seized them and we reduced them to nothing. May the oppressive nation be far removed (from Allāh's mercy)!"*

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا ءَاخَرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَـْٔخِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَا ۖ كُلَّ مَا جَآءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا كَذَّبُوهُ ۚ فَأَتْبَعْنَا بَعْضَهُم بَعْضًا وَجَعَلْنَٰهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ ۚ فَبُعْدًا لِّقَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَأَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَسُلْطَٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِۦ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ وَكَانُوا۟ قَوْمًا عَالِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ فَقَالُوٓا۟ أَنُؤْمِنُ

لِبَشَرَيْنِ مِثْلِنَا وَقَوْمُهُمَا لَنَا عَٰبِدُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْمُهْلَكِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى ٱلْكِتَٰبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُۥٓ ءَايَةً وَءَاوَيْنَٰهُمَآ إِلَىٰ رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

(42) Then We created numerous nations after them. (43) No nation can outstrip their term, nor can they delay it. (44) Thereafter We sent Our messengers in succession. Whenever a messenger came to his nation, they denied him. So We brought one nation after the other and made them mere fables. May the disbelieving nations be distanced! (45) Thereafter We sent Mūsa and his brother Harūn with Our signs and a manifest proof (46) (We sent them to) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his ministers, but they were haughty and an arrogant folk. (47) They said, "Should we believe in two humans like ourselves whereas their people are our slaves?" (48) So they falsified the two of them and became of the destroyed ones. (49) We had certainly granted Mūsa the Book so that they may be guided. (50) And We made the son of Maryam and his in mother a sign and settled them on such a hill that was habitable and had water.

SAYYIDINA MŪSA AND HĀRŪN عليهما السلام ARE SENT TO PHARAOH *(FIR'AUN)* AND HIS PEOPLE

Allāh says that after the destruction of Sayyidina Nūh's عليه السلام nation and the one after them, He *"created numerous nations after them."* These include, among others, the people of Sayyidina Lūt عليه السلام and the nation of Sayyidina Shu'ayb عليه السلام. However, they refused to believe in their Prophets عليهم السلام and were granted grace until a specified term. Allaah says. *"No nation can outstrip their term, nor can they delay it."* When their terms expired, they were all wiped out by Allāh's punishment.

"There after We sent Our messengers in succession. Whenever a messenger came to his nation, they denied him. So We brought one nation after the other and made theme mere fables." There was nothing left of them besides the fact that later nations spoke of them. Allāh then says, *"May the disbelieving nations be distanced (from Allāh s mercy)!"* A disbeliever can never be worthy of Allāh's grace and mercy.

"Thereafter We sent Mūsa and his brother Harūn with Our signs and a manifest proof" Commentators mention that *"Our signs"* refer to those mentioned in verse 130 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*), where Allāh says. *"Without doubt We afflicted the people of Pharaoh (Fir'aun) with droughts and shortages in their produce so that they take heed..." The "manifest proof"* in the above verse refers to the staff of Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام.

"(We sent them to) Pharaoh (Fir'aun) and his ministers, but they were haughty and an arrogant folk. They said, 'Should.we believe in two humans like ourselves whereas their people (the Bani Isrā'īl) are our slaves?'" Their pride forbade them from following the two Prophets عليهم السلام because they deemed them to be slaves. As a result, *"they falsified the two of them and became of the destroyed ones."* They were eventually drowned as they attempted to cross over the sea.

Allāh says, *"We had certainly granted Mūsa the Book so that they may be guided.* Under the persecution of Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)*, the Bani Isrā'īl were unable to practise their Shari'ah. After Pharaoh *(Fir'aun)* was drowned, they were granted the Torah, containing all the injunctions of their religion *(Dīn)*. Surah An'ām says that the Torah was *"a detailed explanation of all things."* The details of how the Bani Isrā'īl treated their religion *(Dīn)* have been given in various verses of Surah Baqarah and Surah An'ām.

SAYYIDINA ISA عليه السلام AND MARYAM عليها السلام

Allāh continues to say, *"And We made the son of Maryam and his mother a sign..."* The miraculous birth of Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام without a father clearly signifies the immense powers of Allāh. The numerous miracles he displayed (as mentioned in Surah Āl Imrān and Surah Mā'idah) also express Allāh's grandeur.

Allāh has clearly mentioned in many places of the Qur'ān that Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام was the son of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, and Surah Maryam explicitly mentions that he had no father. However, certain irreligious people are still adamant to falsify these verses of Allāh's Book by saying that his father was a certain person named Yusuf (Joseph). In saying so they are also accusing Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام of fornication (Allāh forbid!). This is nothing short of blasphemy.

Allāh says further about Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام that He *"settled them on such a hill that was habitable and had water."* Here Allāh speaks about the place where he settled mother and son. They had ample provisions from the fertile ground and an abundant supply of water.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Salām رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه say that the place referred to is Damascus, whereas Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه is of the opinion that it was a place called Ramla. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه states that it was Baitul Muqaddas. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 31*]

These are the authentic opinions of the pious sages of Islām. However contemporary heretics say that the graves of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم are in Kashmir! In saying so they are denying the fact that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام never died, even though Allāh categorically says, *"With certainty, they never killed him but Allāh raised him towards Himself"* [*Surah Nisā (4). verses 157, 158*]

"Bayānul Qur'ān" reports that a king by the name of Birdous heard from astrologers that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام was soon to be a leader. He therefore hated Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام from childhooūd. For this reason Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام took her son to Egypt for his safety and returned to Shām only after this king had died. The land of Egypt is along the Nile, which provides ample water.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرُّسُلُ كُلُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَٱعْمَلُوا۟ صَٰلِحًا ۖ إِنِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾ وَإِنَّ هَٰذِهِۦٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَٰحِدَةً وَأَنَا۠ رَبُّكُمْ فَٱتَّقُونِ ﴿٥٢﴾ فَتَقَطَّعُوٓا۟ أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا ۖ كُلُّ

(51) O you messengers! Eat from the pure things and do good deeds. Verily lam Aware of what you do. (52) Without doubt, this way of yours is one and I am your Lord, so fear Me. (53) However, they split their affairs between themselves into segments, each party being content with what they had. (54) So leave them in their ignorance for a while. (55) Do they think that by Our granting them an increase in wealth and sons... (56) .... We wish to hasten in granting them good? But they fail to perceive.

THE COMMAND TO EAT THE PURE THINGS, THE DIVISION OF MAN INTO GROUPS, AND WORLDLY POSSESSIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY SIGNIFY GOOD FORTUNE

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه quotes that Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Allāh is Pure and accepts only pure things. Allāh has given the believers *(Mu'minīn)* the same command that He has given to the Prophets عليهم السلام. Allāh addressed the Prophets عليهم السلام saying, *"O you messengers! Eat from the pure things and do good deeds."* Allāh addresses the believers *(Mu'minīn)* saying, *"O you who believe! Eat from the pure things which We have provided for you..."* [*Muslim v. 1 p. 326*]

This command entails three aspects. The first is that we should abstained from Unlawful *(Harām)* and impure foods. The second is that we should consume pure foods, and the third is that we should carry out good deeds.

The strength and nutrition derived from lawful *(Halāl)* Halāl and pure foods should be utilised in the obedience of Allāh and not in perpetrating sins. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"Eat from the provision of your Lord and be grateful to Him."* [*Surah 34, verse 15*]

"Without doubt, this way religion (D'īn) of yours is one and I am your Lord, so fear Me. However, they split their affairs between themselves into segments, each party being content with what they had." The basic principles of belief in all divine Religion (Dīn)s were the same, for they all propagated Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)* and belief in resurrection. However, many people refused to follow the religious teachings of the Prophets عليهم السلام, and chose rather to formulate their own religion's *(D'īn's)* and codes of belief. They even admit that they are unable to prove conclusively that their religion's *(D'īn's)* will guarantee salvation in the Hereafter.

Even among those who claim to be Muslims, there are many whose beliefs are totally corrupted. They make preposterous claims such as the Qur'ān has been altered, that their "Imāms" have the authority to declare things lawful *(Halāl)* and Unlawful *(Harām)*, that their "Imāms" are a part of Allāh, that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was not the final Prophet, etc. These are all beliefs that they have fabricated in direct contradiction of the Qur'ān.

Allāh then commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to continue with his

duty of preaching to the masses. If they refuse to accept, they cannot be forced, but rather (Allāh tells him), he should *"leave them in their ignorance for a while."* When they leave this world, they will realise the error of their ways.

"Do they think that by Our granting them an increase in wealth and sons, We wish to hasten in granting them good? But they fail to perceive." If the disbelievers think that Allāh wishes them well by granting them the commodities of this world, they are wrong. Allāh grants them these things so that they can fall deeper into deviation and sin until they are adequately seized for punishment.

Note: The verse *"Eat from the pure things and do good deeds"* tells us that lawful *(Halāl)* foods have an impact upon good deeds. They serve to increase one's potential for performing good deeds, whereas Unlawful *(Harām)* foods considerably decrease this potential. On the contrary, Unlawful *(Harām)* foods cause one to sin.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ (57) وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ (58) وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ (59) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ (60) أُولَٰئِكَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ (61) وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۖ وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (62)

(57) Verily those who are fearful of their Lord .... (58) And those who believe in the verses of their Lord... (59) And those who do not ascribe partners to their Lord... (60) .... those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord. (61) These people hasten to perform good deeds and are the forerunners in this. (62) We do not burden any soul more than it can bear. We have by Us a Book that speaks the truth, and they will not be oppressed.

THE QUALITIES OF THE PIOUS

The first quality of the pious is that they are *"those who are fearful of their Lord..."* The second is that they are *"those who believe in the verses of their Lord,"* the third is that they *"do not ascribe partners to their Lord," and the fourth is that they are those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord."* They are wary of their return to Allāh and are concerned about the way in which they earn and spend their wealth.

Thereafter Allāh praises these people by saying, *"These people hasten to perform good deeds and are the forerunners in this."* Instead of being like the people of this world, who compete in amassing wealth, the pious people compete in acts of devotion that will benefit them in the Hereafter.

"...those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord." Concerning this verse, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم if those *"whose hearts tremble"* pertained to those who consume intoxicants and steal.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied that they were not implied, but rather those people who perform Salāh and fast, yet are fearful that these deeds will not be accepted from them. These are the ones who *"hasten to perform good deeds and are the forerunners in this."* [*Mishkāt p.* 458]

This hadith teaches us that we should be fearful that our deeds will be rejected by Allāh, even though they may be performed in all sincerity and with proper care. There is always the possibility that a person falters in his deed or performs it deficiently.

Allāh has been kind enough to grant man the ability to perform good deeds and still reward him for them. If He has willed, he could have commanded the deeds without promising reward.

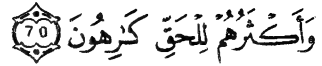
Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to teach him a supplication *(du'ā)* that he could recite at the end of the Salāh. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised him to recite:

TRANSLATION: "O Allāh! I have greatly wronged myself, and none can forgive sins besides Yourself. So grant me special forgiveness from Yourself and have mercy on me. Undoubtedly, You are the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."

It should be noted that this supplication *(du'ā)* for forgiveness is recited after a great act like Salāh and was prescribed to a great personality like Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه. Scholars *(Ulama)* therefore mention that a person should seek forgiveness from Allāh after performing good deeds as well, so that he may be forgiven for any deficiencies in them.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once said, "No person's deeds can secure salvation for him." Thereupon Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها asked, "Not even yours?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Not even mine, unless Allāh enshrouds me with His mercy."

"We do not burden any soul more than it can bear." Allāh only commands people to do what they can, and all these deeds will be recorded. On the Day of Judgement, these records will be exposed and people will be rewarded or punished accordingly. None will be oppressed on this day. Referring to this, Allāh says, *"We have by Us a Book that speaks the truth, and they will not be oppressed."*

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هَٰذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلٌ مِّن دُونِ ذَٰلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَٰمِلُونَ (63) حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَآ
أَخَذْنَا مُتْرَفِيهِم بِٱلْعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمْ يَجْـَٔرُونَ (64) لَا تَجْـَٔرُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُم مِّنَّا لَا تُنصَرُونَ (65)
قَدْ كَانَتْ ءَايَٰتِى تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَعْقَٰبِكُمْ تَنكِصُونَ (66) مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِۦ
سَٰمِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ (67) أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا۟ ٱلْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَآءَهُم مَّا لَمْ يَأْتِ ءَابَآءَهُمُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ (68) أَمْ
لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا۟ رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهُۥ مُنكِرُونَ (69) أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِۦ جِنَّةٌۢ بَلْ جَآءَهُم بِٱلْحَقِّ

(63) However, their hearts are in ignorance about this religion (D'īn). And they have other deeds that they carry out besides this. (64) Until the time comes when We will seize the affluent ones among them with punishment, they will suddenly plead. (65) "Do not plead today! You will receive no help from Us." (66) "My verses used to be recited to you, but you turned on your heels... (67) . in arrogance, mocking the Qur'ān and raving on." (68) Have they not pondered over this speech, or has such a thing come to them that never came to their forefathers? (69) Or have they not recognised their the Holy Prophet, causing them to reject him? (70) Or do they say that he is insane? No, but he has brought the truth to them and most of them dislike the truth.

THE DISBELIEVERS ARE AVERSE TO THE TRUTH AND DO NOT CONTEMPLATE

After discussing the pious people, Allāh now speaks of the disbelievers. He says. *"However, their hearts are in ignorance about this religion (D'īn). And (besides rejecting the truth and adhering to disbeliefs) they have other (evil) deeds that they carry out besides this."*

Allāh say that they will remain in this state *"Until the time comes when We will seize the affluent ones among them? with punishment..."* When this happens, then *"they will suddenly plead."* However, it will be too late, and they will be told, *"Do not plead today! You will receive no help from Us."*

Allāh will also tell them, *"My verses used to be recited to you, but you turned on your heels in arrogance, mocking the Qur'ān and raving on."* They would say that the Qur'ān was a composition of fairy tales and poetry.

Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to mean that the Disbelievers of Makkah were arrogant about the fact that they were the custodians of the Masjidul Harām They would sit during the nights and tell tales to each other until the early hours.

"Have they not pondered over this speech (the Qur'ān), *or has such a thing come to them that never came to their forefathers?"* The only apparent reason for their rejection of the Qur'ān could be that they have never given thought to the beauty of the Qur'ān. If they had really done so, they would have certainly accepted it.

Another reason could be that they have never heard of any Prophets عليهم السلام before, so the advent of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was something new to them. However, this was also not the case, because they were well aware of the previous Prophets عليهم السلام and even professed to follow Sayyidina Ibrahīm عليه السلام and claimed to make Hajj like he did.

"Or have they not recognised their Prophet, causing them to reject him?" Another apparent reason for their rejection of the Qur'ān could be that they have not recognised the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم However, this is also no excuse because they knew him from childhood and had perfect knowledge of his veracity and high integrity. They would be lying if they used this excuse.

"Or do they say that he is insane?" This excuse is also baseless, because they knew that he was the most noble of them. All these excuses carry no weight. Allāh says that the fact of the matter is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *"has brought the truth to them and* (they reject because) *most of them dislike the truth.*

Although Allāh's punishment seizes all disbelievers, Allāh specifically speaks of the punishment afflicting the *"affluent"* people because they are often guilty of the double sin of not accepting the truth, as well as forbidding others from accepting it. Another reason is that they are also generally in a better position to defend themselves from adversities, yet they are helpless against Allāh's punishment.

Another reason for mentioning them specifically is that they usually cannot bear difficulties and are more likely to quickly plead and cry over their plight. "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that the punishment mentioned above refers to the battle of Badr, when many leaders of the Quraysh were killed.

وَلَوِ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ۚ بَلْ أَتَيْنَاهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجًا فَخَرَاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٧٣﴾ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنَاكِبُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ ۞ وَلَوْ رَحِمْنَاهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِمْ مِنْ ضُرٍّ لَلَجُّوا فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

(71) If the truth had to conform to their whims, the heavens, earth and all within the two would be corrupted. But We have brought its advice to them, and they ignore its advice. (72) Or do you ask repayment from them? The payment of your Lord is best and He is the Best of Providers. (73) Verily, you call them to the straight path. (74) Those who do not believe in the Hereafter are certainly deviated from the straight path. (75) If We have mercy on them and alleviate their adversities, they will blindly plunge back into their rebellion. (76) We have surely afflicted them with punishment, but they do not submit to their Lord, nor have they humbled themselves. (77) Until the time comes when We shall open for them a door of severe punishment and they will be left totally bewildered.

IF THE WHIMS OF THE DISBELIEVERS ARE FOLLOWED, THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WOULD BE CORRUPTED

Allāh says that the truth can never conform to the whims and fancies of people because *"if the truth had to conform to their whims, the heavens, earth and all*

within the two would be corrupted." If people were left to do as they please, they would totally corrupt the system of the universe by inviting Allāh's punishment because of their evils.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will never dawn as long as there is a single person saying "Allāh!" [Muslim]. Therefore, once Belief *(Imān)* is lost on earth, the universe will be destroyed by the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

"But We have brought its advice to them, and they ignore its advice." People ignore Allāh's counsel to them and continue to behave in their own evil ways.

Allāh then addresses the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Or do you ask repayment from them* (because of which they feel it difficult to accept the truth)?" This is a hypothetical situation expressed by Allāh to indicate that the disbelievers have no excuse not to accept Islām because they are not even asked for remuneration for the message.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم needs nothing from the people because *"The payment of your Lord is best and He is the Best of Providers."*

"Verily, you call them to the straight path." This was the message of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, *"Those who do not believe in the Hereafter are certainly deviated from the straight path."* They will not respond to preaching.

Allāh then says, *"If We have mercy on them and alleviate their adversities, (then, instead of being grateful to Allāh and accepting His commands,) they will blindly plunge back into their rebellion."*

Allāh says in Surah Zumar, *"When any adversity afflicts man, he supplicates to Allāh, turning to Him only. Then, when Allāh confers a bounty upon him, he forgets for what he supplicated to Allāh before. He then ascribes partners to Allāh, thereby misleading (others) from Allāh's path. Say, Enjoy your disbelief for a while! You will certainly be from the inmates of the Fire."* [*Surah 39, verse 8*]

"We have surely afflicted them with Punishment, but they do not submit to their Lord, nor have they humbled themselves." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once supplicated to Allāh to afflict the Quraysh with a drought similar to the one suffered by the people of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. Abu Sufyān came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said. *"Do you not say that you have been sent as a mercy to the worlds'?"*

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم confirmed this, Abu Sufyān said, "You have destroyed our elders in Badr and are killing our children with starvation? Pray to Allāh to alleviate our drought." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then prayed to Allāh to remove the drought, whereupon the above verse was revealed viz. *"We have surely afflicted them with punishment, but they do not submit to their Lord, nor have they humbled themselves.*

Those who cannot humble themselves when afflicted by punishment will surely not do so when in comfort and prosperity.

"Until the time comes when We shall open unto them a door of severe punishment and they will be left totally bewildered." This verse sounds a warning to them that

they should mend their ways and accept the truth before they are totally annihilated by Allāh's punishment.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that the *"severe punishment"* refers to the battle of Badr. Other commentators say that it refers to death, while another group maintains that it refers to the advent of Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*.

Another interpretation of the verse is that this punishment would leave them totally without hope.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي
ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ اخْتِلَافُ اللَّيْلِ
وَالنَّهَارِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾ بَلْ قَالُوا مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿٨١﴾ قَالُوا أَإِذَا
مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾ لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ وَآبَاؤُنَا هَٰذَا مِن قَبْلُ
إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ قُل لِّمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَا إِن كُنتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ
السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾ قُلْ
مَن بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ
﴿٨٨﴾ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ۚ قُلْ فَأَنَّىٰ تُسْحَرُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾ بَلْ أَتَيْنَاهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ
﴿٩٠﴾

(78) Allāh is the One Who created your ears, eyes and hearts. Seldom is it that you show gratitude. (79) It is He Who has dispersed you on earth, and to Him shall you be resurrected. (80) It is He Who gives life and death and it is only because of Him that the night and day alternate. Do you not understand? (81) But they say what their predecessors said. (82) They said, "Will we be resurrected after we have died and become dust and bones?" (83) "Our forefathers and ourselves were certainly promised the same from before. It is but a fable of the old men. (84) Say, "To whom belongs the earth and whoever is on it, if you know?" (85) They will soon reply, "it all belongs to Allāh."' Say, "Will you not take heed?" (86) Say, "Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the tremendous Throne?" (87) They will shortly reply, "It all belongs to Allāh." Say, "Do you not fear?" (88) Say, "In whose grasp is the control of all things? Who is it that can offer refuge, while none can provide refuge against Him, if you know?" (89) Shortly they will say, "It all belongs to Allāh." Say, "Then whence have you been bewitched?" (90) But We have sent the truth to them, and they are certainly liars.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF ALLĀH'S CREATION AND A REFUTATION TO THE REJECTERS

The previous verses mentioned those who reject and the above verses discuss the Oneness of Allāh and force the disbelievers to admit to His illustrious attributes. Allāh begins by declaring, *"Allāh is the one who created your ears, eyes and hearts."* Because of these great bounties, people should be grateful to Allāh. However, it is unfortunate that *"Seldom, is it that you show* gratitude." Instead they express ingratitude by rejecting Allāh's Prophets عليهم السلام and His divine scripture.

"It is He Who has dispersed you on earth...." i.e. Allāh has allowed the various generations of man to flourish on earth. Thereafter He will give death to all, after which *"to Him shall you be resurrected."*

"It is He Who gives life and death and it is only because of Him that the night and day alternate. Do you not understand?" If man understood these phenomena, he would see Allāh's immense power and realise that there can be only One Allāh.

*"But they say what their predecessors said. They said, 'Will we be resurrected after we have died and become dust and bones? Our forefathers and ourselves were certainly promised the same from before. It is but a fable of the old men. "'*In making these statements, they reject Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*, saying that if it were true, why has it not occurred as yet?

They fail to realise that Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)* will dawn only when Allāh wills that it should. The fact that it has not yet come does not negate the truth of its occurrence.

Allāh then commands the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, *"Say* (to them), *'To whom belongs the earth and whoever is on it, if you know?' They will Soon reply, 'It all belongs to Allāh Say, 'Will you not take heed?'" despite realising this fact, they fail to conform.*

"Say, 'Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the tremendous Throne?' They will shortly reply, 'It all belongs to Allāh. Say, 'Do you not fear (that you reject this despite knowing the truth)?"'

A third question is posed. *"Say, 'In whose grasp is the control of all things? Who is it that can offer refuge, while none can provide refuge against Him, if you know?' Shortly they will say, 'It all belongs to Allāh.' Say, 'Then whence have you been bewitched?"'* Their refusal to accept the truth seems totally illogical since they accept that Allāh has sovereignty and power over all things. The only reason for this type of behaviour seems to be that they have been bewitched.

Despite admitting to the above, they still remain adamant not to accept. Therefore, Allāh says, *"But We have sent the truth to them, and they are certainly liars."*

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ ۚ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَٰهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا
بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩١﴾ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

(91) Allāh has not taken any Son, nor are there any deities with Him. If there were, then every deity would have separated his creation and some would overpower the others. Allāh is Pure from the partners that they ascribe to Him. (92) Allāh is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, so He is Exalted above the partners that they ascribe.

ALLĀH HAS NO CHILDREN AND IS FREE FROM WHAT THE IDOLATERS ASCRIBE TO HIM

Even today there are those Christians who say that Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام is Allāh's son. Allāh has refuted this belief in numerous places of the Qur'ān. In the above verse as well, Allāh explicitly says, *"Allāh has not taken any son, nor are there any deities with Him.*

Allāh then explains to the polytheists that if it is to be assumed that other gods coexisted with Allāh, the situation would certainly arise when *"every deity would have separated his creation* (so that he could have sole control over them) *and* (eventually) *some would overpower the others."* When such a situation takes place, some god would take control over the creation of another. This would cause devastation.

However, all are aware of the fact that nothing like this has taken place and that Allāh has created everything. There is no power struggle in the system of the universe and everything functions perfectly according to Allāh's dictates. However, despite realising all of this, the polytheists still do not accept Oneness of Allāh *(Tauhīd)*.

Allāh declares, *"Allāh is Pure from the partners that they ascribe to Him."* He has no children, nor any partners.

Allāh then describes Himself when He says, *"Allāh is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, so He is Exalted above the partners that they ascribe."*

قُل رَّبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيَنِّي مَا يُوعَدُونَ (93) رَبِّ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي فِي الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (94)
وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ أَن نُّرِيَكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَادِرُونَ (95) ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةَ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَا يَصِفُونَ (96) وَقُل رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ (97) وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ
أَن يَحْضُرُونِ (98)

(93) Say, "O my Lord! If you happen to show me the punishment promised to the disbelievers, (94) then, O my Lord, do not make me of the oppressive folk." (95) We are certainly Capable of showing you what We have promised them. (96) Resist evil with that which is best. We know best what they ascribe. (97) And say, "O my Lord! I seek refuge with You from the evil whispering of the Shayātīn..." (98) "And I seek refuge with You, O my Lord, so that they do not

approach me."

RESIST EVIL WITH GOOD AND SEEK ALLĀH'S PROTECTION FOR THE EVIL OF THE SATANS *(SHAYĀTĪN)*

The disbelievers are sure to be punished after their deaths, but they have also been warned of punishment in this very world. However, Allāh never specified whether they will be punished during the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم lifetime or not. Therefore, Allāh teaches His beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to supplicate by saying, *"O my Lord! If you happen to show me the punishment promised to the disbelievers, then, O my' Lord, do not make me of the oppressive folk."* i.e. do not let me suffer with them, because usually the people close to those being punished also suffer the effects of the punishment.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه has reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"When Allāh' s punishment descends, all in the vicinity are affected. However, all will be resurrected according to their deeds on the Day of Judgement."* [*Bukhāri*]

All the previous Prophets عليهم السلام were saved when Allāh's punishment afflicted their respective nations. Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make the above supplication *(du'ā)* to make him aware that he should never stop fearing Allāh and should never lose reliance in Allāh. The verse also serves to teach the believers *(Mu'minīn)* the same supplication *(du'ā)*.

"We are certainly Capable of showing you what We have promised them." In another verse Allāh had assured the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that He would never punish the disbelievers while he is present with them. However, this refers to such a punishment that affects everyone. Allāh could still punish individuals and sections of the community. Allāh reserves the right to do as he pleases.

"Resist evil with that which is best." Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to combat the opposition of the disbelievers in a manner that constitutes kind behaviour and forgiveness. It is the demand of good character that evil should not be resisted with evil.

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah, *"Good and evil cannot be equal. Resist with that which is best, and the one between yourself and whom there was enmity, will instantly become like your bosom friend. Only the patient ones will be inspired with this. Only the most fortunate will be inspired with this."* [*Surah 41, verse 34, 35*]

One may not conclude that the above verse has been abrogated by the verses commanding Jihād because good character will always be in vogue.

Allāh says, *"We know best what they ascribe* (and will punish them accordingly)."

"And say, 'O my Lord! I seek refuge with You from the evil whispering of the Satans (Shayātīn) and I seek refuge with You, O my Lord, so that they do not approach me." Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has been advised to recite this supplication, its importance for the common Muslim cannot be overemphasised. Every Muslim should recite it constantly so that he may be safeguarded from the evil instigation of the devils.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that a person should recite the following supplication *(du'ā)* if devils scare him during his sleep viz. [*Tirmidhi*]

{TRANSLATION}: "I seek refuge with all the words of Allāh from His wrath, His punishment, from the evil of His bondsmen, for the evil whispering of the Satans *(Shayātīn)* and that they should approach me.

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَهُمُ ٱلْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ٱرْجِعُونِ ﴿99﴾ لَعَلِّىٓ أَعْمَلُ صَٰلِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ
كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَآئِلُهَا وَمِن وَرَآئِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿100﴾ فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِى
ٱلصُّورِ فَلَآ أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿101﴾ فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ
فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿102﴾ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَٰزِينُهُۥ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا۟
أَنفُسَهُمْ فِى جَهَنَّمَ خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿103﴾ تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ ٱلنَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَٰلِحُونَ ﴿104﴾ أَلَمْ
تَكُنْ ءَايَٰتِى تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿105﴾ قَالُوا۟ رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا
وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَآلِّينَ ﴿106﴾ رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿107﴾ قَالَ
ٱخْسَـُٔوا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿108﴾ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِى يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا
فَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ ﴿109﴾ فَٱتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا حَتَّىٰٓ أَنسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِى
وَكُنتُم مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ ﴿110﴾ إِنِّى جَزَيْتُهُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوٓا۟ أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ
﴿111﴾

(99) Until the time arrives when death comes to any one of them, then he says, "O my Lord! Allow me to return... (100) ..... so that I may perform good deeds whence I have left." Never! It is merely a statement that they speak. Behind them is "Barzakh" until the day that they are resurrected. (101) When the trumpet is blown, neither shall there be any family ties between them, nor will they be able to plead to each other. (102) Whoever's scales are weighty shall surely be successful. (103) Whoever's scales are light, these are the ones who have put themselves at a loss by remaining forever in Hell. (104) The Fire shall scorch their faces and they shall be disfigured there. (105) "Were My verses not recited to you, but then you used to falsify them?" (106) They will cry, "O our Lord! Our wretchedness overpowered us and we were a deviated nation. (107) "O our Lord! Remove us from here! If we ever repeat ourselves, then we must surely be oppressors." (108) Allāh will say, "Remain disgraced therein and do not speak to Me!" (109) "There was certainly a party of My bondsmen who said, 'O our Lord! We have believed, so forgive us and have mercy on us. Indeed You are the Best of those who show mercy.'" (110) "But you people ridiculed them until they made you forget My remembrance. And you used to laugh at them."

(111) "I have rewarded them today for their patience that they are certainly successful."

THE CONDITION OF & 'BARZAKH' AND RESURRECTION, WHERE THE PLEAS OF THE DISBELIEVERS WILL NOT BE HEARD

Allāh says that the disbelievers will continue to lead their lives in the manner that they please *"Until the time arrives when death comes to any one of them..."* Then he will see the reality of the Hereafter before his very eyes. His soul will be removed by the angels and he will be beaten. He will then regret his past and cry out to Allāh saying, *"O my Lord! Allow me to return* (to the world) *so that I may (believe and) perform good deeds whence I have left."*

Allāh will reject his plea and say, *"Never!"* Allāh goes on to say, *"It is merely a statement that they speak."* Their request shall never be acceded to.

"Behind them is 'Barzakh' until the day that they are resurrected." The word *"Barzakh"* literally refers to a barrier that separated two places or two conditions. In this context, it refers to the waiting period between death and Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. The soul of a person enters the domain of *"Barzakh"* after his demise. Only if he was good, will he be comfortable there.

After entering into *"Barzakh"* people cannot return to the world, and after resurrection, none can return to *"Barzakh."* After people have been sent to their respective abodes of Heaven *(Jannah)* or Hell. They will never return from there. Only those sinful Muslims, who are sent for a while to Hell to be cleansed of their sins, will later be removed from Hell to be admitted into Heaven *(Jannah)*.

The conditions of *"Barzakh"* are experienced by all dead people, even though their bodies may be cremated or devoured by predators. The Ahadīth have mentioned the details of what transpires in this existence, and I [the author of this exegesis *(tafsīr)*] have written another book on this subject.

"When the trumpet is blown [after the life of Barzakh to hail the advent of Judgment day (Qiyāmah)], neither shall there be any firmly ties between them?, nor will they be able to plead to each other." No person will be of assistance to another. In fact, all will flee from each other, lest they ask for help.

Allāh says in Surah Abas, *"The day when a men will flee from his brother; his mother, his father, his wife and his sons. Every man shall be engrossed in his own affaiss."* [*Surah 80, verses 34-37*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reports that when the trumpet is sounded for the second time, every man and woman from every century will all be resurrected. A caller will say, "This is so-and-so, the son of so-and-so. Whoever has any rights to claim from him should come forward."

Upon hearing this call, every person will wish that he could claim something from their parents, spouses and children. After saying this, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه recited the verse *"neither shall there be any family ties between them..."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه has also interpreted the verse to

mean that no person will boast about his family lineage on the Day of Judgement, as they do in this world.

While the above verse states that they will be unable to ask of each other, another verse says, *"They will turn to each other asking questions."* There is no contradiction between the two verses because the first refers to the fact that they will not ask help from each other on the grounds of family ties. The second instance does not refer to this. (However, the second refers to questions that they will ask each other -not help).

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that there will be various situations that will take place on the Day of Judgement. When they people will be overwhelmed by fear, they will be unable to ask help from each other. However, there will be times when they will be able to do so. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 317/8*]

"Whoever's scales are weighty shall surely be successful. Whoever 's scales are light, these are the ones who have put themselves at a loss by remaining forever in Hell." The details pertaining to weighing of deeds on the scales were given in the commentary of verses 8 and 9 of Surah A'rāf (*Surah 7*).

Allāh then describes the punishment of the people in Hell. Allāh says, *"The Fire shall scorch their faces and they shall be disfigured there."* Explaining the concluding words of this verse. Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضي الله عنه has reported the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as saying, "A person will be so roasted in Hell that his upper lip will draw back and reach the middle of his face. His lower lip will drop until it reaches his navel." [*Bukhari*]

Allāh will then ask them in Hell, *"Were my verses not recited to you, but you used to falsify them? They will cry, O our Lord! Our wretchedness overpowered us and we were a deviated nation"'*

Admitting their folly, they will then plead to Allāh saying, *"O our Lord! Remove usfrom here! If we ever repeat ourselves, then we must surely be oppressors."*

Their plea will be rejected by Allāh, Who will tell them, *"Remain disgraced in there and do not speak to Me!"* A narration of Tirmidhi says that after this declaration, the people of Hell will lose all hope and begin to lament and wail like the braying of donkeys.

Ibn Kathīr reports that the people of Hell will be so disfigured that the Muslims who will want to intercede shall be unable to recognise them. The people of Hell will tell them who they are, but these Muslims will refuse to believe them. [*v. 3 p. 258*]

After Allāh's declaration all the doors of Hell will be locked and none shall be able to leave.

Allāh will further tell these disbelievers, *"There was certainly a party of My bondsmen who said, 'O our Lord! We have believed, so forgive us and have mercy on us. Indeed You are the Best of those who show mercy.' But you people ridiculed them until they (i.e. your intense opposition to them) made you forget My remembrance. And you used to laugh at them. (Now you will suffer for your deeds)."*

Allāh continues to tell them, *"I have rewarded them today for their patience that they are certainly successful."* Allāh says in *"Whoever is saved from the fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful."* [*Surah Āl Imrān (3), verse 185*]

قَٰلَ كَمۡ لَبِثۡتُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ (112) قَالُواْ لَبِثۡنَا يَوۡمًا أَوۡ بَعۡضَ يَوۡمٖ فَسۡـَٔلِ ٱلۡعَآدِّينَ (113) قَٰلَ إِن لَّبِثۡتُمۡ إِلَّا قَلِيلٗاۖ لَّوۡ أَنَّكُمۡ كُنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ (114) أَفَحَسِبۡتُمۡ أَنَّمَا خَلَقۡنَٰكُمۡ عَبَثٗا وَأَنَّكُمۡ إِلَيۡنَا لَا تُرۡجَعُونَ (115) فَتَعَٰلَى ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡمَلِكُ ٱلۡحَقُّۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلۡعَرۡشِ ٱلۡكَرِيمِ (116) وَمَن يَدۡعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ لَا بُرۡهَٰنَ لَهُۥ بِهِۦ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُۥ عِندَ رَبِّهِۦٓۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُفۡلِحُ ٱلۡكَٰفِرُونَ (117) وَقُل رَّبِّ ٱغۡفِرۡ وَٱرۡحَمۡ وَأَنتَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰحِمِينَ (118)

(112) Allāh will ask (them), "How long did you stay on earth by the count of years?" (113) They will say, "We stayed only a day or a part of a day, but ask those who count." (114) Allāh will say, "You stayed only for a little while, if only you had known. (115) "Did you think that We had created you in vain and that you would not return to Us?" (116) Exalted be Allāh, the Sovereign, the Truth. There is no deity besides Him. He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne. (117) He who calls on another deity with Allāh has no proof for it. His reckoning is with Allāh. The fact of the matter is that the disbelievers will not succeed. (118) Say, "O my Lord! Forgive and show mercy. Undoubtedly, You are the Best of those who show mercy."

ALLĀH IS EXALTED, THE KING AND THE TRUTH

On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah), "Allāh will ask (the disbelievers), 'How long did you stay on earth by the count of years?"* Totally bewildered and frightened, they will reply, *"We stayed only a day or a part of a day, but ask those who count."* i.e. ask the angels, who know better how long our lives were.

"Allāh will say, 'You stayed only for a little while, if only you had known." Even lengthy lives in this world are insignificant when compared to the Hereafter. It would have been best for them if they realised this while still alive.

Allāh will also tell them, *"Did you think that We had created you in vain and that you would not return to Us?"* This thought has led to the destruction of the disbelievers.

Allāh says in Surah HāMīm Sajdah that He will say to them, *"but you thought that Allāh is unaware of most of the things you do. That was the perception that you held about your Lord. It has destroyed you and made you amongst the losers."* [*Surah 41, verses 22,23*]

"Exalted be Allāh, the Sovereign, the Truth. There is no deity besides Him. He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne." Allāh is the King of all kings. Those who ascribe partners to Him should bear in mind that they will be called to account for their

deeds, after which they will be doomed to Hell.

Allāh declares, *"He who calls on another deity with Allāh has no proof for it. His reckoning is with Allāh. The .fact of the matter is that the disbelievers will not succeed."*

Finally, Allāh advises that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Ummah recite the following supplication *(du'ā)*. Allāh says, *"Say, 'O my Lord! Forgive and show mercy. Undoubtedly, You are the Best of those who show mercy."'*

سورة النور

Madinan	Surah An-Nur	Verses 164

سُورَةٌ أَنزَلْنَاهَا وَفَرَضْنَاهَا وَأَنزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١﴾ الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ ۖ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Most beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) This is a Surah that We have revealed, that We have ordained, and in which We have revealed clear verses so that you may take heed. (2) The adulterer and adulteress should both be given a hundred lashes. And mercy for them should not take hold of you with regard to Allāh's religion (D'īn), if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day. A group of the believers should witness their punishment.

THE LAWS OF THE SHARI'AH MUST BE PRACTISED AND THE PENALTY FOR ADULTERY IS A HUNDRED LASHES

This Surah is called Surah Nūr because verse 35 contains the word "Nūr" when describing Allāh. Allāh begins the Surah by saying, *"This is a Surah that We have revealed, that We have ordained..."*

Although the word "faradna" (translated above as *"ordained")* is used in this verse, all the injunctions mentioned in this Surah are not obligatory *(Fardh)* as the word usually denotes. In this context the word means that the believers *(Mu'minīn)* must practice all these injunctions.

Allāh then says about the Surah that He has *"revealed clear verses so that you may take heed."*

WHY DO THE PENALTIES OF THE SHARI'AH SEEM SO HARSH?

"The adulterer and adulteress should both be given a hundred lashes. And mercy for them should not take hold of you with regard to Allāh's religion (D'īn) (i.e. when administering the penalty), if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day." Since "The Most

Merciful of those who show mercy" has ordained these penalties, people must enforce them, even though they may deem it to be somewhat harsh.

Allāh has created man and knows exactly what type of penalties will serve as a deterrent for man because Allāh understands the psychology of man perfectly.

Since this penalty also serves as a lesson for others, Allāh instructs that *"A group of the believers should witness their punishment."* When some people witness the penalty being enforced, they will spread the news to others. This will eventually lead to all the others in the country taking heed and adhering to chaste behaviour.

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Enforce Allāh's penal laws near and far, and the reproach of anyone should not affect you in the matters of Allāh's religion *(D'īn)*." [*Ibn Majah*]

It is unfortunate that Muslim countries fear the reproach of the disbelievers when intending to enforce the penal codes of the Shari'ah. If they enforce these, crime would become extinct or, at least, much less. It would also attract Allāh's mercy.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "When a single penalty of Allāh's is enforced, it is better (more beneficial to the masses) than forty days of continuous rain." [*Ibn Majah*]

Present day governments have permitted adultery and have outlawed only rape. In this manner they have granted immoral people the license to commit adultery and spread promiscuity. Even those who do commit rape are seldom brought to the book and, if by some miracle they are, they serve light sentences and are let out to continue with their evils.

When the leaders of Muslim countries are told to enforce the laws of the Shari'ah (by cutting the hands of thieves, executing murderers and punishing adulterers, etc), they say that mercy should be shown to these criminals. This is in stark contradiction to the clear command of Allāh above, viz. *'And mercy for them should not take hold of you with regard to Allāh's religion (D'īn)...."*

Even worse are those so-called Muslims who perpetrate the act of disbeliefs by saying that the penal laws of Islām are barbaric and cruel. This pathetic behaviour has led to the spread of immorality and licentiousness and dens of vice are now thriving at the expense of chastity and morality. It seems like the governments (even so-called Islāmic governments) condone adultery. They seek to please people instead of Allāh, who granted them the authority that they possess. How can they then expect Allāh's aid?

CERTAIN PERTINENT RULINGS

Ruling: The Muslim male or female who is free (i.e. not a slave), sane, mature, married, and who has consummated his or her marriage is called a 'Muhsin.' If such a person is found guilty of adultery, one should be stoned to death (rajam).

A person who is not a 'muhsin' will be lashed a hundred lashes when found

guilty of adultery.

Ruling: When a man is to be lashed, only that amount of clothing required to cover his 'satar' will be allowed. Everything else must be removed. A woman will be lashed with her body properly covered. Only extra garments that will reduce the effect of the lashes will be removed, like a jacket, a shawl. etc.

Ruling: A man will be lashed standing, while a woman will be seated.

Ruling: They must be lashed with a whip that is not knotted. The lashing must be of a medium nature (that is neither too light nor too hard).

The lashes should be struck on various parts of the body and not restricted to one portion. The whip should not strike the head, face and private part.

Ruling: When the 'Muhsin' is to be stoned, one must be led to a place outside the town. The witnesses who attested to the act of adultery should throw the first stones, followed by the Leader of believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* and then the rest of the public. However, the stoning will be repealed if the witnesses refuse to stone first.

If the person is to be stoned after one has confessed to adultery (i.e. witnesses did not convict the person), then the Leader of believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)*will commence the stoning, after which the public will follow.

When a woman is to be stoned, a hole must be dug and she will be stoned in this hole with only her upper body visible (i.e. from above the breasts).

Ruling: When four men swear that they witnessed someone committing adultery as clearly as if they saw a stick used to apply kohl entering the kohl bottle, the Muslim Qādhi (judge) or the Leader of believers *(Amīrul Mu'minīn)* will launch an investigation to ascertain the trustworthiness of these four men. He will determine whether they are pious and trustworthy. Judgement will be passed only when they are all found to be reliable witnesses.

If they are found to be sinners and unreliable, their evidence will be rejected and they will be lashed for slander (eighty lashes each). The details of this will be discussed in the forthcoming verses, *Insha Allāh.*

Ruling: When a person confesses to having committed adultery four times on four separate occasions, then the Qādhi will ask one whether one knows what is adultery, with whom was the act perpetrated and where was it done. Only after replying to these questions can the judge pass judgement to enforce the penalty.

THE IGNORANT STATEMENTS OF CERTAIN SELF-PROCLAIMED "INTELLECTUALS"

There are many so-called 'scholars' today, who claim to have some knowledge and direct their ignorance at Islām. They are also bribed by certain antagonistic forces to write against the teachings of Islām. Whereas the Muslims have believed for fourteen centuries that the 'muhsin' adulterer must be stoned, these ignoramuses claim that there is no such thing because the Qur'ān does not mention it.

They should be asked which verse of the Qur'ān tells them that whatever is not in the Qur'ān should not be regarded as part of religion *(D'īn)*? In fact, Allāh says, *"Hold last to what the messenger gives you and refrain from what He prevents you"* [*Surah Hashr (59). verse 7*]

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself had some people stoned after they confessed, who are these people to say that it should not be done? Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه, who had anticipated this plot of some people, once said from the pulpit, *"Verily Allāh has sent Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم with the truth and revealed a Book to him. The verse of 'rajam' (stoning) was also among the verses revealed in Allāh's Book. We recited it, understood it and memorised it."*

He continued to say, "The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *has had people stoned and we also followed his example after him. I fear that after much time elapses, a person should say, 'By Allāh! I do not find the verse of 'rajam' in Allāh's Book.' In this way people will be forsaking an obligation that Allāh has initiated, causing them to go astray. Rajam is in Allāh's Book (i.e. it has not been cancelled). It is a reality and will be enforced on any person who is a muhsin when witnesses attest to it, or when one confesses, or by way of an illegitimate pregnancy."* [*Bukhari p. 109*]

In the above sermon, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه referred to an earlier verse of the Qur'ān that made mention of rajam. The recitation of this verse was later abrogated, but the law remained. Those who have studied the principles of jurisprudence will understand this concept well. Other commentators have mentioned that Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه was referring to verse 15 of Surah Nisā (*Surah* 4), where Allāh says. *"As for those of Your women who are guilty of indecent behaviour, call four witnesses against them. If they testify against them, then imprison them in their homes until death claims them or Allāh creates a way for them.*

Other commentators have explained the statement to mean that even if an explicit verse of the Qur'ān does not mention 'rajam', the law will still apply because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had practised it. The Qur'ān commands that obedience to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is also necessary.

Those who refuse to accept 'rajam' as part of religion *(D'īn)* because it is not mentioned explicitly in the Qur'ān, should be asked where in the Qur'ān does Allāh command that Fajr has two Rakāhs of obligatory prayer *(Fardh)*, that Zuhr has four, that Asr has Four, etc? Where does the Qur'ān mention the Nisāb of Zakāh? Just as the direction of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم suffices about these pillars of Dīn, it suffices in the matter of 'rajam' as well.

Even after these miscreants refuse to believe anything, they should be asked why they do not ask their despotic pīrs in governments to enforce the penalty of a hundred lashes, which is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān!? Such people are like the one *"whom Allāh has sent astray despite his knowledge.*

THE ILL EFFECTS OF ADULTERY AND THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY AND MARRIAGE

People have made the absurd statement that the Shari'ah should not forbid adultery since it is a personal affair between a couple. They say that a person may gratify himself with whomsoever he wills. Their stance is even more

surprising because they fail to realise that man has no right to transgress the laws of Allāh, Who has created man, and is his Master. The body and limbs of a person are not his own, but remain the property of Allāh. Using them against Allāh's dictates will constitute rebellion.

Allāh created Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام to be the legitimate partner of Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام and allowed them to live with each other as husband and wife. Allāh has permitted man and wife to preserve their chastity and lawfully gratify their passions within wedlock. Islām has conserved the purity of woman within the fort of the home and instructed men to provide for the couple.

The woman will rear her children with love and compassion, carefully tending to the household so that the family can live in harmony and contentment. The children will form part of the larger family, being showered with love by their parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts. They will all be associated with each other in a most amicable manner, being present should their assistance be needed in any way.

They will all celebrate marriages, births and support each other at times of funerals. All this is possible after marriage. If man and woman merely gratify their sexual passions and live as strangers, there can be no joy in life and the children will never know their parents, nor any other relatives. Since the mother has been 'used' by so many men, there will be none to attend to the upbringing and supporting of the child.

Even if the relatives of the mother know the child, they cannot have true love for the child. The child will grow up without any love and without the anchoring factor of a family. Today's rise of delinquents is ample testimony of this!

Parents of illegitimate children will seek 'friends' for their children instead of spouses. It is the ultimate disgrace to a woman that she has to stand naked in the worst of places searching for a toy to gratify herself, who will forsake her when everything is over.

When a woman is without a husband, she will be forced to provide for herself. She will then become a showroom piece, supplying goods to strangers or standing by the roadside and polishing peoples' shoes. It is indeed surprising that women do not regard this as a disgrace, whereas they could be the queens of their homes.

Islām has accorded great status to a woman by preserving her chastity within her home: Islām has allowed her to stipulate her own dowry and she can receive inheritance from the estates of her spouse, children, parents and other relatives. Is this not better than roaming the alleys in search of a sleeping partner, having her dignity trampled upon?

The above sheds a bit of light upon the abomination of adultery. Besides this, Islām detests the fact that family lineage should be corrupted. In this way people will never know whether a child is theirs or not. Children will thus be blemished with the stigma of being illegitimate, causing them to be scorned by others. It is despicable to note that certain nations attach no importance to legitimacy in birth. They are now trying to pass their behaviour on to the

Muslims. One of the first steps to realise this goal is to annul the penalty for adultery.

The people of Belief *(Imān)* cannot follow the trends of the disbelievers. Islām has outlawed fornication in no uncertain terms and ordained a strict penalty for it. On the other hand, the disbelievers have not only permitted fornication, but they have even allowed men to marry other men! These people are mere slaves of their passions and have no concern for humanity. This behaviour has led to the outbreak of horrendous diseases that cannot be controlled.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه has reported that Allāh casts fear into the hearts of those who break promises and causes widespread death among people who are habituated to fornication. He also mentioned that Allāh reduces the provisions of those who cheat in weighing and measuring (either literally or by reducing the blessings of their wealth), while He causes murder to abound among people who judge unjustly and causes a tyrant to overpower people who do not honour their pledges. [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p. 278*]

Sayyidah Maymūna رضي الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "My Ummah shall remain in good fortune until illegitimate children abound among them. When illegitimacy becomes rife among them, Allāh will afflict them with a widespread punishment (that will affect all of them)." [*At Targhīb wat Tarhīb v. 3 p. 277*]

Bukhari reports a hadith in which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم narrated to the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم many things that he saw in a dream. One of these was that he saw many naked men and women burning in a large oven-like pit that was wide at the base and narrow at the top. They would be lifted by the rising of the flames and screamed in pain and agony. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Jibrīl عليه السلام and Sayyidina Mika'īl عليه السلام who these people were, he was told that they were the adulterers.

ADULTERY CAUSES WIDESPREAD DISEASES

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once addressed the immigrants *(Muhājirīn)*, telling them that if they involved themselves in five things (and he prayed that they never fall into these), then they will encounter serious repercussions. These five things are:

1. When flagrant immodesty will predominate, then pestilence will spread and people will be afflicted with such diseases that their forebears never heard of.

2. Those people who cheat in weight and measure will be punished with droughts, hard labour and the oppression of tyrannical rulers.

3. Those who do not pay their Zakāh will be deprived of rain. If it were not for the animals, they would not receive a single drop of rain.

4. Those who breach the pledge of Allāh and His Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم will be vanquished by their enemy who will usurp their wealth.

5. When the leaders of a nation do not pass judgement by the Qur'ān and do not adopt the ways that Allāh has revealed, Allāh will cause such friction between them that will lead to feuds and battles. [*Ibn Majah p. 112*]

The above hadith clearly spells out the consequences of the sins that man perpetrates, the first one being the atrocious effects of immorality and licentiousness. The gross immorality prevalent at all levels today needs no elucidation. It is for this reason that diseases have taken such a strong hold of community. As medical science progresses, so too do the waves of illnesses spread, leaving man helpless to cure them (AIDS being the best example of these).

The world today is obsessed only with gratification of the carnal passions, and the occidental world is making every attempt to export their immorality to all parts of the world. It is tragic to notice that matters have gone out of control, but none seems to be batting an eyelid.

THOSE WHO DESIRE THAT THEIR CARNAL DESIRES BE GRATIFIED, DO SO AT THE EXPENSE OF MANKIND'S MORALITY

People who have stooped to the level of bestiality have no regard for their values as human beings and are prepared to sacrifice these moral values. Whether they admit it or not, they have become just as the Qur'ān says, viz. *"As for the disbelievers, they enjoy themselves and eat like the animals eat. The Fire shall be their abode."*

Allāh has granted man the gift of intelligence and has ordained various laws and regulations so that he may remain high above the rest of the creation. Allāh has allowed man to satisfy his desires with a woman provided that it is within marriage. All the Prophets عليهم السلام married, with the exception of Sayyidina Isā and Yahya عليه السلام. It is sad that those who claim to follow Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام are sexually active outside of marriage.

Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام will marry after returning to this world to slay Dajjāl, after which he will also father children. He will also destroy the cross and put an end to Christianity. [*Muslim*]

Note: The text of the Qur'ān addresses woman also when it passes a general command, even though the literal Arabic text uses the male pronoun. However, when specific mention is made of females, it is preceded by mention of the male counterpart e.g. *"The Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, obedient men and obedient women, truthful men and truthful women..."* and *"As for the male and female thief cut off their hands in lieu of what they earn..."*

However, when the act of adultery is mentioned in the Qur'ān, the *"adulteress"* is specifically mentioned before male *"adulterer."* This is to emphasise the fact that adulterous females must also be punished. It also

emphasises the fact that women are more prone to this sin and should, therefore, be extra cautious. Since men are more prone to stealing, the verse concerning thieves makes mention of male thieves first.

Note: To some, the punishment for adultery may appear to be extremely severe, but this is necessary to preserve the chastity of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Islām has also prescribed such injunctions that serve to prevent people from even drawing near to adultery. These laws include the injunctions of Veil *(Hijāb)*, whereby Muslim women are commanded to conceal themselves from strange men.

Despite these laws,. if someone commits adultery, the Shari'ah still lays down stringent laws about finding a person guilty of the act. As explained earlier, the four witnesses have to provide explicit evidence about the sexual act. Of course, this is extremely difficult to come by.

If an adulterer confesses to the deed, the laws of the Shari'ah are still strict, and the judge will have to hear the confession from the person on four separate occasions (as explained earlier). The Shari'ah also instructs the judge to repeal the case if there is the slightest doubt. The object of this penalty is not to punish people, but to prevent them from committing adultery.

When a person is finally found guilty after all these factors, he deserves to be removed from society, just as a cancerous limb has to amputated for the welfare of the other limbs.

ٱلزَّانِى لَا يَنكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَٱلزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنكِحُهَآ إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ وَحُرِّمَ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾

(3) An adulterer should marry only an adulteress or an idolatress and only an adulterer or an idolater should marry an adulteress. This is forbidden for the believers.

MARRIAGE OF THE ADULTEROUS BELIEVERS

Many commentators have mentioned that the above verse applied only before the migration *(Hijrah)*. It was thereafter abrogated and the believers *(Mu'minīn)* were later permitted to marry adulterous Muslims when necessary. Of course, the prohibition against marrying idolaters still applies to this day. They maintain that the verse was cancelled by a later verse which reads, *"Marry those from you who are unmarried and those slave men and women who are righteous. If they be poor then Allāh will make each of them wealthy by His grace. Allāh is of ample means, All Knowing."* [*Surah Nūr (24), verse* 32]

Many narratives have been reported about this verse, all of which denote that this law was temporary. One of these, narrated by many commentators, tell us that when the Immigrants *(Muhajirīn)* رضي الله عنهم arrived in Madinah, they were extremely poor. They had no wealth, no family and no wives. There were many prostitutes in Madinah at the time, so some requested permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to marry these women so that they could benefit from

their wealth. The above verse was revealed on this occasion, forbidding them from this. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 323*]

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

(4) As for those who slander chaste women without presenting four witnesses, you should lash them eighty lashes and never accept their testimony ever again. These people are sinners... (5) Except for those who repent thereafter and rectify. Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.

THE PENALTY FOR THOSE WHO SLANDER INNOCENT WOMEN

Islām attaches great importance to the chastity and honour of Muslim men and women. If any person calls another an adulterer in clear words, the offended party may take the case to the Islāmic court, where the accuser will be punished eighty lashes when found guilty of the defamatory remark. This is referred to in the Shari'ah as the "haddul qadhaf."

Another punishment for the slanderer will be that his or her evidence will never be accepted in an Islāmic court. If one repents, the sin will be forgiven, but they will still live with the stigma that their evidence will be rejected by the Islāmic court.

According to Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه, the phrase *"Except for those who repent thereafter and rectify,"* is an exception from the verse, *"These people are sinners."* This means that they will remain sinful until they repent. It does not mean that their evidence will be accepted after repentance.

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُمْ شُهَدَاءُ إِلَّا أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَشَهَادَةُ أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ ۙ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾ وَالْخَامِسَةُ أَنَّ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾ وَيَدْرَأُ عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ ۙ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾ وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٩﴾ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

(6) Those who slander their wives and have only themselves as witness, then any of them should bear testimony four times by Allāh that he is indeed from the truthful. (7) On the fifth occasion he should swear that Allāh's curse befalls him if he is from the liars. (8) Punishment will be averted from the wife if she bears testimony four times by Allāh that he is from the liars. (9) She will then swear on the fifth occasion that Allāh's wrath befalls her if he is from the

truthful. (10) If it were not for Allāh's grace upon you and His mercy, and for the fact that Allāh is verily the Most Clement, the Wise.

THE LAW OF "LI'ĀN" FOR THOSE WHO ACCUSE THEIR WIVES OF ADULTERY

Whereas a person will be lashed for failing to produce four witnesses when accusing a woman of adultery, he will not be lashed when the matter concerns his own wife. If she refutes his accusation, the law of ""li'ān"" will apply. The word "li'ān" is derived from the root word "La'na," which refers to a curse. It is called by this name because the couple invoke Allāh's curse upon themselves if they are lying.

If a man claims that his wife committed adultery, or says that one of her children is not his, he will be asked to present witnesses if she refuses to confess. If he fails to present four witnesses (which is common since adultery is never committed in public and he is unlikely to call others to witness the act), but confesses to lying, he will be lashed for slander. However, if he remains adamant that he is truthful, the couple will be forced to engage in "li'ān".

THE METHOD OF "LI'ĀN"

The husband should begin by repeating four times, "I testify by Allāh that I am certainly truthful in the accusation of adultery that I have levelled against her." After saying this the fourth time, he will then say, "May the curse of Allāh befall me if I am untrue in the accusation of adultery that I have levelled against her." On each occasion he must point to his wife when referring to her.

When he has completed the fifth testimony, the wife will say four times, "I testify by Allāh that he is false in the accusation of adultery that he has levelled against me." On the fifth occasion she will say, "May Allāh's wrath befall me if he is truthful in the accusation of adultery that he has levelled against me."

When the two have completed their damning testimony against each other, the Muslim judge will separate the two. This separation will be regarded as a "bā'in" divorce. If the dispute arose over the birth of a child (he disclaimed fatherhood of a child), the child will then be regarded as illegitimate and become the mother's. If the man detracts his testimony afterwards, he will be lashed for slander.

The books of hadith cite the incidents of Sayyidina Uwaymir Ajlāni رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Hilāl bin Umayyah رضي الله عنه, who were both forced into the situation of "li'ān" [*Bukhari p. 799/800*]. A narration on p. 695, narrated by Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه, reports that the above verse was revealed about Sayyidina Hilāl رضي الله عنه.

Among the many conditions of "li'ān" mentioned in the books of jurisprudence, one is that the husband and the wife should be mature and sane. No "li'ān" will take place if the husband is dumb and merely indicates that his wife committed adultery.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُو بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ
مِّنْهُم مَّا اكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّىٰ كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (11) لَّوْلَا إِذْ
سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَٰذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ (12) لَّوْلَا
جَاءُو عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ عِندَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ
(13) وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِي مَا أَفَضْتُمْ فِيهِ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ (14) إِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُم مَّا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ
وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِندَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ (15) وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُم مَّا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَن
نَّتَكَلَّمَ بِهَٰذَا سُبْحَانَكَ هَٰذَا بُهْتَانٌ عَظِيمٌ (16) يَعِظُكُمُ اللَّهُ أَن تَعُودُوا لِمِثْلِهِ أَبَدًا إِن
كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (17) وَيُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (18) إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
يُحِبُّونَ أَن تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَاللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (19) وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ رَءُوفٌ
رَّحِيمٌ (20)

(11) It was indeed a group from you that brought the slander. Do not regard it as a misfortune, for it was good for you. Every one of them will have his share of the sin, which he earned. A terrible punishment shall be for the one who took the greatest part in it. (12) Why did the believing men and women not think favourably of themselves when they heard about it, and say, "This is clear defamation!"? (13) Why have they not presented four witnesses? Since they have not presented four witnesses, then these people are surely liars in Allāh's sight. (14) If it were not for Allāh's grace upon you people, and for His mercy in this world and in the Hereafter, a dreadful punishment would have afflicted you because of what you involved yourselves in. (15) When you gossiped about the matter with your tongues and said such things with your mouths that you had no knowledge of. You thought that the matter was trivial, whereas it was grave in Allāh's sight. (16) When you heard about it, why did you not say, "It is not appropriate that we discuss this. Allāh is Pure! This is an atrocious smear!" (17) Allāh advises you against repeating the same ever again if you are indeed believers. (18) And Allāh clearly elucidates the verses for you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (19) There shall be an excruciating punishment in this world and in the Hereafter for those who love immorality to spread among the

believers. Allāh knows and you do not know. (20) If it were not for Allāh's grace upon you and His mercy, and for the fact that Allāh is verily the Most clement, the Wise.

THE LIBEL AGAINST SAYYIDAH AYSHAH رضي الله عنها AND ALLĀH'S DECLARATION OF HER INNOCENCE

When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم left on an expedition to the Banu Mustaliq tribe, according to his normal practice, he drew lots among his wives, thereby determining that Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها accompany him on the journey. She rode on a carriage on top of a camel. On their return, the army camped at a place near Madinah. After a rest, the announcement was made during the night that the caravan would soon proceed. This announcement was made so that people could relieve themselves if need be.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها then proceeded deep into the woods to relieve herself so as to avoid contact with any men. When she returned to her carriage, she noticed that her necklace was missing. She therefore returned to where she had been in an effort to recover the necklace. This caused her to delay and, in the meantime, the caravan began to leave.

The men who usually mounted the carriage on the camel did not realise that Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was not in when they lifted it since she was light in weight because of scarcity of food during those times. In this manner the caravan proceeded without her.

When Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها returned to the spot where the caravan was stationed, she was shocked to find that no one was to be seen. Allāh granted her the intelligence to spread out a shawl and lie down right there, thinking that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would search for her at the same place when he found her missing. She then fell asleep.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had appointed Sayyidina Safwān bin Mu'attal Sulami رضي الله عنه to travel behind the caravan so that he may recover any items that the others may have lost. It so happened that he discovered Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها lying down as he rode past the area. He was startled when he saw her. He recognised her because he had seen her before the verses of veil *(Hijāb)* were revealed. He exclaimed, *"Innā Lillāhi wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn!"*

She immediately woke up when she heard him and covered her face. (This incident clearly falsifies those who claim that a woman does not have to cover her face). He dismounted his camel and made it kneel. Thereupon Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها mounted the camel by stepping on its forelegs. Sayyidina Safwān رضي الله عنه then led the camel along.

It was afternoon when the two caught up with the rest of the expedition. Abdullāh bin Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites, was also in the army. When he saw the two approach, he spread the rumour that an affair must be existing between the two, because of which they had remained behind alone. This rumour spread throughout the Muslim community by the efforts of the other Hypocrites and certain other Muslims were also involved in the slander. These Muslims were Sayyidina Hassān bin Thābit رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Mistah bin

Uthātha رضى الله عنه and a lady named Sayyidina Hamnah bint Jahsh رضي الله عنه [who was the sister of Mother of the believers (*Ummul Mu'minīn*), Sayyidah Zainab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها].

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها reports that she was unaware of the rumours, but noticed that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not behave as compassionately towards her as he always did. He would greet and ask all of the household about themselves, but would not ask her. In the interim she happened to fall ill and was once walking with the mother of Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه to relieve herself at night.

When they were proceeding, the old lady slipped on her shawl and muttered, *"May Mistah be destroyed!"* Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها asked her how she could curse a person who participated in the battle of Badr. She replied, *"Don't you know what the people (including Mistah) are saying?"* She then recounted the rumour to Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.

This caused Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها to become even more ill. Later, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked the members of his household about their condition, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها requested permission from him to visit her parents. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted her.

Upon reaching her parent's home, she asked her mother about the rumours. Her mother consoled her by saying that these things happen between women who share a husband. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها then spent the entire night weeping without respite. She could not sleep at nights and continued to weep and grieve. She spent an entire month in this manner. During the entire period no revelation was revealed to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about this matter.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها mentioned that she was sure that Allāh would show the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a dream to absolve her of the scandal because she did not deem herself fit to be blessed with a mention in the Qur'ān.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once with Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and some others when revelation began to descend upon him. He broke out in sweat, which was so severe that the beads of perspiration dropped like pearls even during the coldest winter days. When the revelation terminated, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم laughed and said, "O Ayshah! Praise Allāh, for He has exonerated you." The verses that were revealed commenced with the verse, *"It was indeed a group from you that brought the slander..."*

Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه was the son of Sayyidina Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه cousin, making him a nephew to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه. The generous Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه used to financially assist Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه, but took an oath never to assist him again after Allāh exonerated Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.

About this oath, Allāh revealed the verse, *"The high ranking and wealthy ones among you should not take an oath not to spend on their relatives..."* Thereafter Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه swore never to stop spending on Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه. [*Bukhari v. 1 p. 364 and v. 2 p. 594/696*]

Allāh begins by saying, *"It was indeed a group from you that brought the*

slander." These included Abdullāh bin Ubayy, the hypocrites leader, as well as three other sincere Muslims (mentioned above). Abdullāh and the other hypocrites who played an active part in the episode never repented until the end and are referred to as being part of a group from the believers *(Mu'minīn)* only because they pretended to be believers *(Mu'minīn)*. All the Muslims involved repented.

"Do not regard it as a misfortune, for it was good for you." This verse is addressed to all the believers *(Mu'minīn)* in general, but particularly to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها, her parents and Sayyidina Safwān bin Mu'attal رضي الله عنه. Although the incident may have caused these parties much grief, they were rewarded immensely by remaining patient. The incident was also to the benefit of mankind because of the great lessons that it taught, and because it declared the innocence of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidina Safwān رضي الله عنه, to be learned and recited by students and others until eternity.

"Every one of them will have his share of the sin, which he earned." Every one of the guilty parties would receive punishment in proportion to the part that he played in the rumour. Some people joined in the rumours and others remained silent, whereas they ought to have refuted the story.

"A terrible punishment shall be for the one who took the greatest part in it." This verse refers to the leader of the hypocrites, Abdullāh bin Ubayy. He suffered in this world, and will suffer in the Hereafter as well.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" has reported from Tabarani that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah رضي الله عنه to gather all the Muslims in the Masjid. When they presented themselves, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the verses declaring Sayyidah Ayshah's رضي الله عنها innocence to them.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then called for Abdullāh bin Ubayy and had him lashed for slander twice (i.e. 80 times, plus another 80 times). Thereafter Sayyidina Hassān, Mistah and Hamnah رضي الله عنهم were lashed 80 times each.

"Why did the believing man and women not think favourably of themselves when they heard about it, and say, 'This is clear defamation!'?" This verse chides those Muslims who participated in the smear, as well as those who entertained doubts or did not refute the story outright, by saying *"This is clear defamation!"*

This verse tells that every Muslim must have a good opinion of other Muslims and that they should refute unwarranted accusations made against other Muslims.

Sayyidina Mu'ādh bin Anas رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a Muslim defends another Muslim from the slander of a Hypocrite, then Allāh will send an angel to protect him from the fire of Hell on the Day of Judgement. Allāh will make the person who finds faults in another remain standing on a bridge of Hell. He may escape from there or remain there" [Abu Dawūd] i.e. he may either satisfy the injured person and escape, otherwise he will be made to suffer the punishment.

This type of behaviour is common among women, especially when they

fight with their in-laws. Names are called and slander flies about, even causing some mothers never to forgive their own daughters.

Sayyidah Asmā bint Yazīd رضي الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"The person who defends his brother in his absence, Allāh assumes the responsibility of saving him from the fire of Hell."* [Mishkāt p. 424]

Sayyidina Abu Dardā رضي الله عنه narrates that he heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say, *"Allāh personally assumes the responsibility of rescuing from Hell that person who defends his brother in his absence."* [Ibid]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said, *"Beware of evil opinions, because it is the most false talk."* [Bukhari]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said, *"Good opinions are part of good worship."*

In the above verse Allāh says, *"Why did the believing men and women not think favourably of themselves when they heard about it..."* The word *"themselves"* indicates that all the Muslims are like one single body and that slander against an individual Muslim is tantamount to slandering against all Muslims.

This is similar to the verse of Surah Hujurāt, where Allāh says, *"Never find faults with yourselves (i.e. each other)."* [Surah 49, verse 11]

Sayyidina Nu'mān bin Bashīr رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The Muslims are like one body. If the eye is hurt, the entire body feels the pain, and if the head is aching, the entire body feels the pain." [Muslim]

Therefore, if any Muslim is physically or emotionally hurt, all the Muslims should feel the discomfort and collectively try to alleviate the grief and rebut the accusations.

"Why have they not presented four witnesses? Since they have not presented four witnesses, then these people are surely liars in Allāh 's sight." The allegations were totally unfounded. None could be accused of fornication merely on the grounds of being left behind the army. Any person who makes such an accusation should present four eyewitnesses, otherwise they would be regarded as liars in terms of the Shari'ah. Without the witnesses, the person will be lashed for slander because the matter concerns the honour of another.

The question arises here that since these people had no witnesses to substantiate their allegation, why did the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم not have them lashed earlier, instead of waiting for a month?

The fact of the matter is that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was a "mercy to the universe." It should be borne in mind that the Muslims comprised of all types of people. While the Belief *(Imān)* of many was strong, there were many others who were still new to Islām. Their Belief *(Imān)* was not that strong, while there were also those who were in doubt regarding the affair.

Had the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم punished the slanderers, three of whom were sincere believers *(Mu'minīn)*, the weaker Muslims may have inadvertently said that he had done so because the matter concerned his own wife. This would have caused these people to lose their Belief *(Imān)*. Therefore, the Holy Prophet

صلى الله عليه وسلم accommodated his personal grief so that the Belief *(Imān)* of these people may be preserved. He punished them only when Allāh commanded it.

Any person would understand that if his wife were to be libelled, he would not want the matter to be reported in any book, even though she may be proven innocent. However, the fact that this matter is recorded in the Qur'ān shows that the Qur'ān was not the work of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and that he had no authority to alter anything in it.

"If it were not for Allāh's grace upon you, and for His mercy in this world and in the Hereafter, a dreadful punishment would have afflicted you because of what you involved yourselves in." Allāh tells those Muslims who played a part in the matter that He would certainly have destroyed them had He had not granted them the guidance to repent.

"When you gossiped about the matter with your tongues and said such things with your mouths that you had no knowledge of. You thought that the matter was trivial, whereas it was grave in Allāh's sight." This verse shows that passing on information about any matter also constitutes participation in the actual slander. It is wrong for a person to say that he is only transmitting a message that has reached him. It will also be a sin to tell others about the affair.

"When you heard about it, why did you not say, 'It is not appropriate that we discuss this. Allāh is Pure! This is an atrocious smear!'?" This verse explicitly tells the Muslims that they should not take any part in the slander and should not even discuss it.

"Allāh advises you against repeating the same ever again if you are indeed believers. And Allāh clearly elucidates the verses for you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise." Allāh has advised man about the penalty for slander and has encouraged him to repent.

"There shall be an excruciating punishment in this world and in the Here after for those who love immorality to spread among the believers. Allāh knows and you do not know." This verse warns those who slandered Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and also advises all the believers *(Mu'minīn)* that they should never publicise any such matter, even if it be established. The sins of others should be concealed and may be disclosed only to such people who are able to redress the situation, such as the Amīrul Mu'minīn *(Leader of the Believers)* or the Qādhi.

Those who broadcast immoral acts and cause great disturbance about the matter are included in the purport of *"those who love immorality to spread among the believers."*

It is tragic that today even the Muslims are involved in producing movies, publishing magazines and novels that promote immodesty and promiscuity. They are all warned in this verse of a pending *"excruciating punishment in this world and in the Hereafter."*

Allāh then repeats, *"If it were not for Allāh's grace upon you people and His mercy, and for the fact that Allāh is verily the Most Clement, the Wise."* i.e. if it were not for this, Allāh's punishment would have surely arrived.

۞ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَتَّبِعُواْ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِۚ وَمَن يَتَّبِعۡ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنِ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَأۡمُرُ بِٱلۡفَحۡشَآءِ وَٱلۡمُنكَرِۚ وَلَوۡلَا فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَرَحۡمَتُهُۥ مَا زَكَىٰ مِنكُم مِّنۡ أَحَدٍ أَبَدٗا وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَآءُۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٞ (21) وَلَا يَأۡتَلِ أُوْلُواْ ٱلۡفَضۡلِ مِنكُمۡ وَٱلسَّعَةِ أَن يُؤۡتُوٓاْ أُوْلِي ٱلۡقُرۡبَىٰ وَٱلۡمَسَٰكِينَ وَٱلۡمُهَٰجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِۖ وَلۡيَعۡفُواْ وَلۡيَصۡفَحُوٓاْۗ أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَن يَغۡفِرَ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ غَفُورٞ رَّحِيمٌ (22) إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَرۡمُونَ ٱلۡمُحۡصَنَٰتِ ٱلۡغَٰفِلَٰتِ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتِ لُعِنُواْ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٞ (23) يَوۡمَ تَشۡهَدُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ أَلۡسِنَتُهُمۡ وَأَيۡدِيهِمۡ وَأَرۡجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ (24) يَوۡمَئِذٖ يُوَفِّيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ ٱلۡحَقَّ وَيَعۡلَمُونَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلۡحَقُّ ٱلۡمُبِينُ (25) ٱلۡخَبِيثَٰتُ لِلۡخَبِيثِينَ وَٱلۡخَبِيثُونَ لِلۡخَبِيثَٰتِۖ وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَٱلطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَٰتِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَۖ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَرِزۡقٞ كَرِيمٞ (26)

(21) O you who believe, do not follow the footsteps of Devil (Shaytān). Whoever follows the footsteps of devil (Shaytān), then verily he commands immorality and evil. If it were not for Allāh 's grace upon you and His mercy, none of you would ever be pure. However, Allāh purifies whoever He wills. Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing. (22) The high ranking and wealthy ones among you should not take an oath not to spend on their relatives, the poor and on those who migrate in Allāh's path. They should forgive and pardon. Do you not like Allāh to forgive you? Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful (23) Those who slander unwary, chaste believing women are certainly cursed in this world and in the Hereafter. Theirs shall be a terrible punishment... (24) The day when their tongues, hands and legs will testify against them with regard to what they did. (25) On that day Allāh will give them the full punishment due to them, and they will know that Allāh is verily the Truth and the One who discloses matters. (26) Unchaste women are for unchaste men and unchaste men are for unchaste women. Pure women are for pure men and pure men are for pure women. These people are innocent of what the slanderers say. Theirs is forgiveness and a bounteous reward.

AVOID FOLLOWING DEVIL *(SHAYTĀN)*, NEVER SWEAR NOT TO DO GOOD DEEDS AND THE EVIL FOLK ARE WARNED OF A GRIEVOUS PUNISHMENT

Allāh warns the believers *(Mu'minīn)* by telling them, *"O you who believe, do not follow the footsteps of devil (Shaytān). Whoever follows the footsteps of devil(Shaytān), then (he will be destroyed because) verily he [devil (Shaytān)] commands immorality and evil."* Those who follow the dictates of devil *(Shaytān)* will be led far astray if they do not realise the folly of their ways and repent.

"If it were not for Allāh 's grace upon you and His mercy, none of you would ever be pure." If Allāh does not grant man the guidance to repent, he can never be pure from sin, like the hypocrites who never repented after slandering Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. Allāh then says, *"However, Allāh purifies whoever He wills. Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing."* Allāh grants people the ability to repent and absolves whomsoever He wills from scandal.

"The high ranking and wealthy ones among you should not take an oath not to spend on their relatives, the poor and on those who migrate in Allāh's path. They should forgive and pardon." It has already been mentioned that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه swore not to spend on his nephew Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه because he took an active part in the denigration of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها.

Sayyidina Qatādah رضي الله عنه says that when the above verse was revealed, instructing pardoning, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم summoned Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and recited the entire verse to him. When the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited,

"Do you not like Allāh to forgive you?" Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, "I certainly like Allāh to forgive me." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "Then you should forgive and pardon."

Thereupon Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, "By Allāh! The amount that Mistāh was receiving shall not be stopped, and I will continue giving him." A narration of "Durrul Manthūr" states that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه thereafter began to double the allowance that he previously gave to Sayyidina Mistah رضي الله عنه.

Another narration quotes Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه as saying, "When I see good in acting contrary to an oath, I pay the expiation for the oath and carry out the act that is better."

"Durrul Manthūr" reports from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه that there were other Sahabah رضي الله عنهم also who stopped spending on those Muslims who participated in the slander against Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. they were all advised in the above verse. [*v. 5 p. 34/5*]

"Those who slander unwary (women who are unwary of how to commit evil deeds), chaste believing women are certainly cursed in this world and in the Hereafter. Theirs shall be a terrible punishment the day when their tongues, hands and legs will testify against them about what they did." All these limbs will testify against them on the Day of Judgement.

There seems to be a discrepancy between the above verse and a verse in Surah Yāsīn, where Allāh says, *"On this day We shall seal their mouths."* The simple answer is that each verse describes a separate scene of the Day of Judgement. There will be times on the lengthy Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)* when peoples' mouths will be sealed, whereas at other times they will be able to speak.

"On that day Allāh will give them the full punishment due to them, and they will know that Allāh is verily the Truth and the One who discloses matters." People are wrong to think that they will get away with their sins and will not be required to answer for them. Everything will be disclosed on the Day of Judgement. This

verse addresses those hypocrites who never repented after the verses were revealed declaring Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها's innocence.

"Unchaste women are for unchaste men and unchaste men are for unchaste women. Pure women are for pure men and pure men are for pure women." Allāh states in this verse that He has made birds of a feather flock together. People with evil inclinations are attracted to others like them, while good people are attracted to other good people.

This verse tells us that Allāh has made the best and purest women the wives of His purest slaves viz, the Prophets عليهم السلام. It follows, therefore, that the wives of the best Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم must be the best and purest of women. It will therefore be impossible to even fathom that any of them could be guilty of an act as vile as fornication. Saying this would be tantamount to slandering the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself (Allāh forbid!). People who say this are *"cursed in this world and in the Hereafter."*

Allāh then says about the pure believers *(Mu'minīn), "These people are innocent of what the slanderers say. Theirs is forgiveness and a bounteous reward [in Heaven (Jannah)]."* This verse clearly spells out the innocence of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها and Sayyidina Safwān رضي الله عنه. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 335*]

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها used to say that she is proud of a few privileges that were accorded to her. These were:

1. *She was the only virgin that the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *married?*
2. *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم) *passed away in her lap.*
3. *He is buried in her room.*
4. *There were numerous occasions when revelation descended on the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *while he shared a bed with her.*
5. *Her innocence was proclaimed from the heavens.*
6. *She was the daughter of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *first Caliph (Kalifa) and companion in the cave* [Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه]
7. *She was created pure [because of which she could be a wife of the pure the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم*].*
8. *She has been promised forgiveness and a bounteous sustenance."*

Al Isābah reports from Ibn Sa'd that Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, "I have been granted certain bounties that were not granted to any other." She then enumerated these as:

1. *The Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *married her when she was barely seven years old?*
2. *An angel brought her picture to the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *on a silken cloth.*

3. *She began to live with the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *from the age of nine.*
4. *She saw Jibrīl* عليه السلام*,*
5. *She was the most beloved wife of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم.
6. *She cared for the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم *during his last illness and when he passed away no one was present besides her and the angels. ['Durrul Manthūr" v. 5 p. 32]*

Some Scholars *(Ulama)* have recounted the virtue of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها by saying that a little child declared the innocence of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام when he was accused of fornication. As a little baby also, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام declared his mother's innocence when she was accused of the same. However, Allāh Himself declared Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها's innocence in numerous verses of the Qur'ān.

Allāh has warned in the Qur'ān that those who slandered Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها are *"cursed in this world and in the Hereafter,"* that they will suffer an "excruciating punishment," and that *"Allāh will give them the full punishment due to them."* However, a group pretending to be Muslims, who call themselves the Shias, claim that the slander directed at Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها was true.

These ignorant people also have the audacity to say that Sayyidina Mahdi عليه السلام will lash the grave of Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها (as a penalty for fornication) when he comes to this world. There are therefore falsifying the Qur'ān, thus joining the ranks of the disbelievers. They are also *"cursed in this world and in the Hereafter."*

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لَا تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْنِسُوا۟ وَتُسَلِّمُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾ فَإِن لَّمْ تَجِدُوا۟ فِيهَآ أَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوهَا حَتَّىٰ يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَإِن قِيلَ لَكُمُ ٱرْجِعُوا۟ فَٱرْجِعُوا۟ ۖ هُوَ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾ لَّيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَدْخُلُوا۟ بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُونَةٍ فِيهَا مَتَٰعٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

(27) O you who believe, do not enter any home besides your own until you have acquired permission and greeted the inhabitants. This is best for you so that you take heed. (28) If you do not find anyone there, then do not enter until you are permitted to enter. If you are told to return, then return. This is purer for you. Allāh is Aware of what you do. (29) There is no harm if you enter uninhabited homes that contain benefit for you. Allāh knows what you disclose and what you conceal.

THE NECESSITY AND ETIQUETTE OF SEEKING PERMISSION TO ENTER A HOME

The preceding verses discuss the abomination of fornication. There are numerous factors that lead to this vile act, one of them being the casting of glances on to things that one is forbidden to look at. It is for this reason that Allāh has commanded Muslims to seek permission before entering any house.

Allāh says, *"O you who believe, do not enter any home besides your own until you have acquired permission and greeted the inhabitants."* A Sahabi رضي الله عنه once entered the presence of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without asking permission to enter. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him to go back to the door and say, "*As Salāmu Alaykum.* May I enter?" [*Abu Dawūd*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Do not allow the person who does not greet to enter." [*Mishkāt p. 401*]

Allāh then says, *"This is best for you so that you take heed."*

"If you do not find anyone there, then do not enter until you are permitted to enter." One may not enter a house until one receives permission to do so. This is so because the possibility exists that someone is present there. Even if there is none in the home, one may not enter because it would be tantamount to using the property of another without permission. If this is not permissible, then it is even worse to enter a house without permission when someone is there.

"If you are told to return, then return." Whether a person is verbally refused permission to enter, or such an indication is received, then he should leave the premises. He should not feel disgraced because *"This is purer for you."* The person should not wait or remain where he is because this will inconvenience the people of the house. The person should also not be persistent when he has already been refused permission to enter."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "When any of you thrice seeks permission to enter and then receives no reply, he should leave." [*Bukhari Pg, 923*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once came to the house of Sayyidina Sa'd bin Ubādah رضي الله عنه. After thrice requesting permission to enter, no reply was issued forth. Therefore, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم began to leave. Thereafter, Sayyidina Sa'd رضي الله عنه ran behind the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, bade him enter and served him some raisins to eat. [*Mishkāt p. 369*]

This incident teaches us that a person should not continue knocking the door or ringing the bell incessantly when receiving no reply after the third occasion. This is uncivil and annoying for the person of the house.

Allāh continues, *"There is no harm if you enter uninhabited homes that contain benefit for you. Allāh knows what you disclose and what you conceal."* This verse permits entry into public places. A person need not seek permission to enter any such place which people generally use for their benefit, such as Masājid, Madrassahs, hospitals, hotels, etc. Of course, without permission, one may not enter the Imām's quarters, nor classrooms and other living quarters and offices in these places.

After the verse *"O you who believe, do not enter any home besides your own until you have acquired permission..."* was revealed, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "When the Quraysh traders travel between Makkah, Madinah, Shām and Baitul Muqaddas, they live in buildings that have been constructed en route. No one lives in these buildings, so from whom should permission be sought and who should be greeted?" It was then that the above verse was revealed viz. *"There is no harm if you enter uninhabited homes that contain benefit for you."* [*v. 5 p. 40*]

AHDĪTH PERTAINING TO THE ETIQUETTE AND LAWS OF SEEKING PERMISSION TO ENTER

📖 It is reported that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم never stood directly in front of a door when he requested permission to enter. He would stand at the right or the left of the door and announce, *"As Salāmu Alaykum!" There were no curtains on doors during those days."* [*Abu Dawūd*]

This teaches us that our gazes should never fall into the house when the door is opened.

📖 Sayyidina Thaubān رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that three things are not permissible for anyone. These are:

(1) That a person who is the Imām in Salāh should make supplication *(du'ā)* only for himself. In so doing, he has betrayed them.

(2) That a person looks into a house before receiving permission to enter. In so doing, he would have betrayed the people of the house.

(3) That a person performs Salāh while suppressing the need to relieve himself. [*Abu Dawūd*]

📖 Sayyidina Sahl bin Sa'd رضي الله عنه narrates that a person peeped through a hole in the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم door. At that time, the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم had a type of a comb in his hand, with which he was scratching his head. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said to him, "If I knew that you were peeping at me I would have poked your eyes with this instrument. Permission is sought because of the gaze (i.e. to safeguard the gaze)." [*Bukhari p. 922*]

Another narration states, "Whoever looks into the house has entered." [*Abu Dawūd*]

When a person seeks permission to enter and someone asks who he is, he should mention his name. If the person of the house is still unaware of his identity, he must introduce himself properly.

Sayyidina Jābir رضي الله عنه narrates that he once came to see the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about settling his father's debts. When he knocked at the door, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked who it was. Sayyidina Jābir رضي الله عنه (instead of saying his name) replied, "Me." Annoyed, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Me? Me?" [*Bukhari p. 923*]

A person does not have to seek permission to enter his own home if he lives alone. However, if others share the house with him, he must first ask permission to enter, even if the others happen to be close relatives like his mother, sister, etc.

Sayyidina Ata bin Yasār رحمة الله عليه reports that a person once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "Should I seek permission to enter when my mother's home?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "You must seek her permission first." The person then said, "But I live with my mother." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Then too you should request permission.

The person mentioned, "I have to serve my mother (so I have to see her often)." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him, "You should seek permission from her at all times. Do you wish to see your mother naked?" "Certainly not," replied the person. "Then," said the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "you must seek permission from her whenever you wish to enter." [*Mālik*]

It is even preferable for a man to request permission from his wife before entering the home. Otherwise he should at least cough, shuffle his feet or do something else so that she knows he is coming.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd's رضي الله عنه wife reports that her husband always cleared his throat outside the door so that she was aware of his presence. She says that he did this so as not to see her in an unpleasant condition. [*Ibn Kathīr*]

By making the woman aware that he is approaching the husband will not find his wife unkempt, thereby causing her to be less attractive to him.

Women must also request permission before entering the home of another woman so that she does not see any part of her body that may be exposed. There are many parts of the woman's body that even other women may not see (the details of this will follow soon, *Insha Allāh*).

It is also possible that the lady may be engaged in something (even though permissible) that she does not like another to know about.

Sayyidah Umm Ayādh رضي الله عنها narrates that she was one of four women who often visited Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. However, she says, they always sought permission before entering and would enter only when permitted.

When a person's voice can be heard while he is still outside, he should greet audibly and state his name so that the people of the house do not have to ask him his identity. When Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه came to the door of Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه, he announced, ***"As Salāmu Alaykum!*** This is Abdullāh bin Qais (his real name). ***As Salāmu Alaykum!*** This is Abu Mūsa. ***As Salāmu Alaykum!*** This is the Ash'ari." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 211*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه has reported from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that a person who has been summoned by another need not request permission to enter with the envoy.

Note: Some people have a very close relationship and do not mind when they enter each other's homes without permission. It will be permissible for such people to enter each other's homes without permission.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه, "It is sufficient permission for you to enter my home that you hear the slightest sound from me, thereby acknowledging that I am at home. In this event you may lift the curtain and enter, unless I forbid you." [*Muslim*]

Note 1: Verbal permission is not necessary. A person may enter another's home with any recognised form of permission. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه reports that he would visit the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once during the day and once during the night. When he went at night, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would merely clear his throat to indicate that he Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه could enter. [*Mishkāt p. 401*]

Note 2: It is permissible for one to wait by the side of his teacher's or mentor's door without informing him, so that one could ask him something or accompany him somewhere. This is so because he would not be offended by this.

Note 3: A person should not knock harshly at a person's door, because this will startle one who is asleep or confuse a person who may be performing Salāh. One should knock only so audibly that someone is able to hear.

قُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ
وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا
يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَائِهِنَّ أَوْ ءَابَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ
أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي
أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ
الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ
لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِن زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

(30) Tell the believing men that they should lower their gazes and protect their chastity. This is purer for them. Allāh is Informed of what they do. (31) And tell the believing women that they should lower their gazes and preserve their chastity. They must not expose their beauty, except what becomes apparent of it. And they should wear their scarves over their bosoms. They may expose their beauty only to their husbands, their fathers, their fathers-in-law, their sons, the

sons of their husbands, their brothers, the sons of their brothers, the sons of their sisters, their women, their (female) slaves, those male parasites who have no passions, or children who are not aware of women's concealment. They should also not strike their feet on the ground to reveal the beauties that they conceal. Collectively repent to Allāh, O you believers, so that you may succeed.

SAFEGUARDING THE GAZES, PROTECTING ONE'S CHASTITY AND THE "MAHĀRIM"

These two verses detail the laws of Islāmic veil *(Hijāb)*. Allāh begins by instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"Tell the believing men that they should lower their gazes and protect their chastity. This is purer for them. Allāh is Informed of what they do. And tell the believing women that they should lower their gazes and preserve their chastity."* Lowering one's gaze goes a long way is saving a person from fornication, because this tempts a person and summons him to complete the act.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "The fornication of the eyes is in looking, the fornication of the ears is in hearing, the fornication of the hands is in holding and the fornication of the feet is in walking. The heart desires and hopes, while the private organs culminate or falsify the act." [*Muslim v. 2 p. 336*]

This means that all the actions leading to the act of adultery are considered as adultery, irrespective of which limb commits it. However, there are times when the couple is unable to terminate the vile deed, referred to here as falsification of the act.

The Shari'ah has formulated stringent laws about which parts of the body should be concealed from sight. No part of the body may be exposed which will arouse the passions of the opposite sex. Even if a woman does not conceal herself, the man should not look at her.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once forbade them from sitting by the roadside. When they told him that they were forced to talk by the roadside, he told them, "If you must, then observe the rights of the road." When the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم what this rights were, he replied, "Lower your gazes, do not harm anyone, reply to greetings, enjoin good and forbid evil." [*Bukhari*]

Although one may see a woman who is his 'mahram' (whom he cannot marry), he must not look at her if she arouses his desires. He will then have to refrain from looking at her.

Sayyidina Jarīr bin Abdillah رضي الله عنه once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "What must I do if my gaze falls (on a woman) inadvertently?" The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Then turn it away."

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once told Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه, "O Ali! Do not sustain a gaze (which falls inadvertently) because the first gaze will be forgiven, but you will be taken to task if you sustain the gaze." [*Mishkāt p. 269*]

Sayyidina Ubādah bin Sāmit رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you guarantee six things for me, I will guarantee Heaven *(Jannah)*

for you. (*viz.*)

(1) *When you speak you speak the truth.*

(2) *When you make a promise you fulfil it.*

(3) *When a trust is kept with you, you return it.*

(4) *You preserve your chastity.*

(5) *You lower your gazes.*

(6) *You restrain your hand (from oppression)."[Mishkāt p.415]*

Allāh then says, "*They* (the women) *must not expose their beauty, except what becomes apparent of it.*" Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه says that this refers to the outer shawl that a woman wears. When a woman has to emerge from her house out of necessity, she should cover her entire body. The only thing that people will then see is her outer shawl.

"*And they should wear their scarves over their bosoms.*" The women during the period of ignorance used to wear their scarves in such a manner that only their heads were covered. The ends were flung behind their backs, leaving their bosoms and ears uncovered. Allāh instructs women not to do this.

Bukhari (*v. 2 p. 700*) reports from Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها that the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم women tore up their shawls and made them into scarves when the above verse was revealed viz. "*And they should wear their scarves over their bosoms.*"

A narration of Abu Dawūd (*v. 2 p. 211*) states that they tore their thicker shawls into two, making scarves out of them. These scarves completely covered all the hair, together with the bosoms and the ears. It should be borne in mind that this law applies to normal conditions when a woman is at home. When she has to leave the house, then she has to conceal her entire body.

The scarves worn by the fashionable women of today do not conform to the standards of the Qur'ān and the Ahadīth. Today's scarves are much too thin and do not even cover the hair properly. Even Salāh cannot be performed with these types of scarves. Women who wear such scarves are a typical reflection of the women who lived during the period of ignorance.

Thereafter Allāh makes mention of all those men who are considered to be "Mahram" to women. These are primarily relatives from whom a woman has no fear because they are also concerned about her safety and the preservation of her chastity.

Allāh says, "*They* (women) *may expose their beauty only to their husbands...*" A woman does not have to conceal any part of her body from her husband. Of course, it will be better if they did not see the private organs of each other.

Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها says that she never looked at the private organs of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is also strongly advised that a couple should not cohabit while they are both naked. Thereafter, the verse enumerates all the other "Mahārim" (plural of 'Mahram').

These are, *"their fathers (as well as grandfathers), their fathers-in-law, their sons, the sons of their husbands* (from other wives viz. step-sons), *their brothers* (whether real or step), *the sons of their* (real and step) *brothers* (i.e. nephews), *the sons of their* (real and step) *sisters* (i.e. nephews)..."

The men mentioned above may see only a woman's face, head, arms and feet. However, if it is feared that any of them may also be aroused by seeing these parts of her body, she should not disclose them to him. If there is no fear of the mahram being aroused by seeing any other parts of her body (besides the permitted parts; like the back, stomach, etc) then too these should remain concealed.

A mahram is actually a person to whom a woman may never be married. There are other mahārim besides those mentioned above, like the uncles (maternal and paternal), those men who were also suckled by the same foster mother as the woman and those boys who were suckled by the woman herself. The same laws will apply to them as do to the other mahārim mentioned above. Cousins are not regarded as mahārim and should be treated as such.

Thereafter Allāh says that women may be seen by *"their women..."* This refers to other Muslim women. The author of "Hidāya" writes that a man may see the entire body of another man, except for the area between the navel and the knees. Similarly a woman may see the body of another woman, with the exception of the same area between the navel and the knees. Of course, in both the above rulings, it must be remembered that no part of the body may be exposed when there is a fear of sexual arousal.

Many women are extremely negligent when it comes to giving birth. In that situation, only the mid-wife or nurse (who is delivering the baby) is allowed to see between the woman's legs. No other person (including the mother) may see this part of the body. It is Unlawful *(Harām)* for a woman to be completely naked when delivering her child.

Some jurists have mentioned that Muslim women may not show themselves to disbeliever women because they are not included in the context of *"their women."* Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه as saying that Muslim women may not remove their scarves before disbelievers women.

Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه wrote to Sayyidina Abu Ubaidah رضي الله عنه, instructing him not to permit women of the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* to share the public baths with Muslim women. It has been recorded in the canonical work "Durrul Mukhtār" that disbeliever women are to be regarded as non-mahram men with regard to the question of veil *(Hijāb)*.

In the commentary of the above extract, the author of "Raddul Mukhtār" writes, "It is not permissible for a Muslim woman to expose herself (i.e. her hair, arms) before Jewish women, Christian women or idolatresses, unless they are her slave women. It is also not proper for pious women to do so before sinful women because these women may describe them to other men. A woman should therefore not remove her scarf before them."

A Muslim woman may therefore show only her face and hands to

disbelievers women, even if they are lady doctors, nurses, maids, etc. A woman should attempt to employ the services of Muslim mid-wives to deliver their children. If a disbeliever woman has to be used, the Muslim woman should not expose her hair to her.

The next exception mentioned by Allāh is *"their* (female) *slaves..."* When Muslim women participate in Jihād, they may become lawful owners of slaves. Imām Abu Hanīfah رحمة الله عليه and Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه are of the opinion that the above verse refers to only female slaves i.e. a woman need not adopt veil *(Hijāb).* in front of them.

The author of "Ruhul Ma'āni" says that initially Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Musayyib رحمة الله عليه was of the opinion that the verse included male and female slaves. However, he later changed his opinion and used to say, "Never let the verse of Surah Nūr deceive you because it refers to female slaves and not male slaves.

The author of "Hidāya" says that the male slave is a man, a non-mahram and not the husband. Sexual arousal can overcome him as well; therefore the same laws will apply to him as applies to all non-mahārim. In "Ahkāmul Qur'ān", Allāma Qurtubi رحمة الله عليه has reported from numerous commentators that the male slave may not see the hair of his mistress. [*v. 12 p. 233/4*]

There is no difference of opinion among the Scholars *(Ulama)* about the servants employed at home. They must be treated as non-mahārim. Male employers may therefore not look at their maids.

"......those male parasites who have no passions..." This refers to those men who are not mentally alert and who have no interest in women. Their only concern is to get a plate of food to eat, because of which they frequent certain households. Women have nothing to fear from them. Women may also treat them as mahārim. Of course, if it is feared that women may be attracted to these men, they will have to conceal themselves from them.

Hail and healthy old men are not to be treated as being of this category because veil *(Hijāb).* is to be observed in front of such men. Castrated men are also not to be regarded as Mahārim.

Bukhari reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once with Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها while a eunuch was visiting her. The eunuch told her brother, "O Abdullāh, if Allāh allows you to conquer Tā'if, I will show you Ghaylān's daughter. As she arrives, you will see four folds on her stomach, and when she leaves you will see eight folds on her back." Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed his wives never to allow such person to visit them. [*Mishkāt p. 270*]

"...or children who are not aware of women's concealment." i.e. those immature boys who are unaware of the anatomy and distinct features of women. It will be necessary for a woman to conceal herself from boys who are aware of these things.

"They (women) *should also not strike their feet on the ground to reveal the beauties that they conceal."* Muslim women may wear jewellery on condition that it

is not worn to display to others and that the jewellery does not jingle and cause an attraction. It is for this reason that they should also not draw attention to themselves when walking.

A lady, wearing chiming jewellery, once came to Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها said, "Do not allow her to approach me until she removes this jewellery. I have heard the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say that angels never enter the home that contains musical things." [*Abu Dawūd*]

Since it is forbidden to listen to the musical tones of jewellery, it will be even worse to listen to the sweet voices of non-mahram women. Her voice may be heard only in the case of an exigency.

A woman may leave her home only when she is forced to. Then too, she should cover herself properly and ensure that her outer garments are not decorated and attractive. It is also forbidden for her to apply perfume when she goes out.

Sayyidina Abu Mūsa Ash'ari رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Every eye is adulterous. When a woman applies perfume and passes by a gathering of males, she is so-and-so i.e. like a prostitute." [*Abu Dawūd*]

"Collectively repent to Allāh, O you believers, so that you may succeed." This verse commands all believers *(Mu'minīn)* and women to make repentance *(Taubah)* to Allāh. They should repent for all their sins, especially those related to passions and unlawful gazes, because others are not aware of these. When a person unlawfully looks at something Unlawful *(Harām)*, only he is aware of it - not even the one whom he looked at.

A REJECTION OF FOOLISH STATEMENTS MADE ABOUT VEIL *(HIJĀB)*.

Many so-called Muslims who have no regard for the religion *(D'īn)*, and who wish to adulterate Islām are trying to get Muslim women to roam the streets like the immoral women of the west. Certain Egyptian and Indo-Pak writers have penned some notes on these lines.

The only substantiation that they can fabricate is based on the verse *"They* (the women) *must not expose their beauty, except what becomes apparent of it."* Since they find the commentary of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه (that the verse refers to the outer garment of the woman) to be contrary to their whims, these ignorant writers have chosen rather to adopt an interpretation reported from Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه, where he says that it refers to the face and the hands.

They have no reason to ignore the interpretation of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم himself mentioned, *"Hold fast to the religious laws that are told to you by the son of Umm Abd i.e. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه."* [*Mishkāt p. 578*]

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed that Allāh grant Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه the knowledge of the Qur'ān. Even if his interpretation is assumed, it does not permit women to roam around as they do. Allāh says that a

woman may expose those parts of the body that *"becomes apparent"* not those parts that they deliberately expose. Therefore, when a woman exposes her face and emerges from her home, she will be making her face apparent. Her face will not *"become apparent"* by itself (as the verse states).

Another factor to be remembered is that the verse does not discuss exposure of the body to non-mahram men. These people themselves apply the laws to non-mahram men because Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه never sanctioned exposure of the face and the hands to non-mahram men. His statement means that a woman is allowed to expose the face and the hands when working in her home and that these may be seen by the mahārim of the house.

There are also those enemies of chastity who pass rulings that covering of the face is preferable (mustahab) and not Compulsory. These ignorant Islāmic jurist have no understanding of the Qur'ān and Ahadīth. They do not realise that women will not stop at merely exposing the face, but that they will soon expose much more than this - as can be seen today.

These people have totally misinterpreted the statement of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه to serve their own ends. Their "knowledge" is really ignorance.

THE COMMAND TO ADOPT VEIL *(HIJĀB)*. IN SURAH AHZĀB

Allāh says in Surah Ahzāb, *"So when you ask them for anything, then ask them from behind a curtain. This is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.* "What is the necessity for asking from behind a curtain if there was nothing like veil *(Hijāb)*.? Women are not wandering naked in their homes, but generally expose only their faces at home. Despite this, Allāh commands non-mahram men to only speak to them from behind a curtain. This clearly indicates that their faces are not to be seen.

This verse is a command which indicates a obligatory act. Furthermore everyone understands that the face is generally the most attractive part of a person.

Allāh also says in Surah Ahzāb, *"O the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه وسلم! *Tell your wives, your daughters and the women of the believers that they should draw down their 'jalābīb' over themselves. This is best for their recognition so that they are not harmed."* Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه has mentioned that this verse commands all believers *(Mu'minīn)* women to cover their heads and faces with large cloaks (and to expose nothing) except one eye. In this way, they can be recognised as free women (because slave women were not required to be so thorough in covering themselves).

This is that same Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه who has mentioned that faces and hands are implied in the verse *"They* (the women) *must not expose their beauty, except what becomes apparent of it."* Since he has stated that only one eye is to be exposed when a woman leaves her home, it is obvious that he meant to permit exposure of the hands and face only when a woman is at home (as mentioned above).

Satan *(Shaytān)* is extremely clever and has persuaded people to believe that

the laws of veil *(Hijāb)*. apply only to the wives of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, the above verse of Surah Ahzāb clearly refutes this concept. In fact, any sensible person will realise that if the law was addressed only to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, it will then surely apply to other women to a greater degree.

This is so because Allāh has mentioned that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives are the *"mothers"* of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. If they were commanded not to draw attention to themselves, it is obvious that women who desire to be attractive and who lack the modesty of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives, must also be commanded to preserve their chastity in a similar manner.

THE COMMAND OF VEIL *(HIJĀB)*. IN THE AHADĪTH

Mention has already been made of the incident of the slander against Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها. When Sayyidina Safwān bin Mu'attal رضي الله عنه saw her lying on the sand, he exclaimed, *"Innā Lillahi wa Innā Ilayhi Rāji'ūn!"* She awoke with this and immediately covered her face. When recounting the incident she mentioned that he had recognised her because he had seen her before the laws of veil *(Hijāb)*. were revealed. This clearly indicates that the law of veil *(Hijāb)*. included covering of the face as well.

The hadith has also been mention in which Bukhari reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was once with Sayyidah Umm Salamah رضي الله عنه while a eunuch was visiting her. The eunuch told her brother, "O Abdullāh, if Allāh allows you to conquer Tā'if, I will show you Ghaylān's daughter. As she arrives, you will see four folds on her stomach, and when she leaves you will see eight folds on her back." Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed his wives never to allow such person even to visit them. [*Mishkāt p. 270*]

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه reports that Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه ,once told the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he should instruct his wives to observe veil *(Hijāb)* because all types of good and evil people visit him at his home. Thereafter, the laws of veil *(Hijāb)* were revealed. [*Bukhari p. 706*]

This hadith also indicates that the face is to be covered because it s obvious that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives never exposed anything else to the visitors.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه also narrates that many people were invited to the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم Walima meal (an invitation to meals hosted by the bridegroom) when he married Sayyidah Zaynab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها. Most people left after eating, but three persons continued to sit behind to talk. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was shy to tell them to leave, so he went to Sayyidah Ayshah's رضي الله عنها room.

Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه says that he later informed the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that the men had left. Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه was about to enter the room with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (as he usually did, because he was a servant) when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم drew a curtain between himself and Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه. The verses of veil *(Hijāb)* had then been revealed viz. *"O you who believe! Only enter the rooms of the Holy Prophet* صلى الله عليه

وسلم *when you are permitted to do so to partake of a meal..."* [*Bukhari p. 706/7*]

Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه served the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for ten years. It is obvious that the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wives never exposed more than their faces to Sayyidina Anas رضي الله عنه during the period before the command of veil *(Hijāb)*. Since the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not allow Sayyidina Anas to be with him, it is therefore certain that veil *(Hijāb)*. entailed the covering of the face as well. The laws of veil *(Hijāb)*. were especially meant to conceal faces from men because the other parts of the body had already been concealed from before.

Abu Dawūd reports that when the son of Sayyidah Umm Khallād رضي الله عنها passed away in a battle, she came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while wearing a veil over her face. A Sahabi رضي الله عنه asked, "You have come to find out about your son, yet you (never failed to remember to) cover your face?" She replied, "I have been afflicted with the calamity of losing my son, but will not be afflicted with the calamity of losing my modesty." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her that her son has attained the reward of two martyrs. When she enquired about the reason, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Because the people of Book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* had killed him." [*v. 1 p. 336*]

This hadith also refutes the belief of those who think that the face need not be covered. It also serves as a lesson to those who think that the laws of the Shari'ah do not apply to one who has been afflicted with any calamity. It is often noticed that women wail excessively when any relative passes away. They then insist on following the bier out of the house, totally heedless of the laws of Hijāb. The Shari'ah will always be of paramount importance whether one is suffering from a calamity or whether one is overjoyed about something.

Detailing the laws of Hajj,The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that the woman performing Hajj should not cover her face. This tells us that women used to cover their faces during the time of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Women are under the misconception that Hijāb is not necessary during Hajj. Dispelling this misnomer, Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها says, "When we were in Ihrām with the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, we would draw our shawls over our faces when any men passed by. We would then remove it when they passed." [*Mishkāt p. 232*]

Another hadith quoted by those who refute Hijāb of the face is one narrated by Sayyidah Asmā bint Abi Bakr رضي الله عنها. She narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told her, "O Asmā! When a girl comes of age, nothing should be seen of her except the face and the hands."

The first thing to bear in mind is that the chain of narrators who transmitted this hadith is broken i.e. some narrators are unknown. This causes the hadith to be unreliable. This hadith also does not specify that non-mahārim can see these parts of the woman (and it could very well refer to her attire at home).

Those who refute the institution of veil *(Hijāb)*. want others to be just as immoral as they are. They seem to want their mothers, sisters and daughters to parade in the streets as a passing show for all.

HIJĀB AND SALĀH

Some people have quoted the ruling about Salāh which says that the hands and face of a woman are not regarded as "awrah" (i.e. they do not have to be covered in Salāh). They then foolishly say that this ruling applies to a woman when she goes out of her house. These are two separate situations and cannot be confused.

The author of Durrul Mukhtār has written that the free woman should cover her entire body in Salāh besides the hands, face and feet. She should also ensure that her hair is covered, even the hair that may be loose. However, he writes thereafter that this ruling applies to Salāh and should not be confused with the covering of the face in front of non-mahram men. He emphatically states that a woman must cover her face in front of non-mahram men because its neglect leads to sin.

A woman's face should especially be covered when it is feared that men may be attracted by it. In fact, when there is such a fear, then a person should not look at the face of even a young beardless boy. Everyone knows well that the exposure of the face (especially in today's times) leads to sin.

The author of "Jalālain" writes in the commentary of the verse "*They* (women) *must not expose their beauty, except what becomes apparent of it*" that this refers to the hands and the face [according to Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه]. Certain opinions (according to the Shafi'ī school of jurisprudence) state that a man can see the face of a woman when there is no fear of sin. Another opinion says that it is Unlawful *(Harām)* to look at the face of a non-mahram because of the fear of sin. This second opinion has been preferred because it shuts the door to sin. (This proves that even the Shafi'ī school of jurisprudence requires that it is incumbent for a woman to cover the face).

CONCLUSION

Modesty plays an exceptionally important role in Islām. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Modesty and Belief *(Imān)* are one and the same thing. When the one is removed, the other must follow." [*Mishkāt p. 432*]

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "*No man should see the private parts of another man and no woman must see those of another woman. No two men should lie (naked) beneath one sheet, nor should two women lie (naked) beneath one sheet.*" [*Muslim*]

The "private parts" of the man (which none can see) refer to the area between the navel to just below the knees. It is Unlawful *(Harām)* to expose this area to anyone (except the wife).

Ruling: It is not permissible to touch any area of the body that cannot be seen, even if it is done beneath the clothes without seeing. This refers to men and women. Of course, when there is an emergency, the above laws may be altered.

However, there are only two instances of emergencies. The first is when a woman has to give birth. In that case, the midwife or nurse is allowed to see only the area that they need to see.

The second exception is undergoing medical treatment. Then too, only that much exposure of the body is permitted as is necessary - not more. If a person is injured on the thigh, the doctor may see only the affected area. This may be achieved by wearing an old garment and cutting away the area where treatment is required. It should be borne in mind that only the doctor may see the affected area at that time and no one else.

A doctor may feel the pulse of a non-mahram patient, but should remove his hand immediately thereafter.

A FINAL NOTE

If a woman does not exercise veil *(Hijāb)*, it will still not be permissible for any man to look at her. The laws of the Shari'ah cannot be shunned even if the husband allows people to look at his wife. It will still be Unlawful *(Harām)* to look at her. Why should the Muslim women emulate the disbelievers? Our religion *(D'īn)* is perfect and we should not compromise it for the petty gains of this world.

It should also be borne in mind that it is Unlawful *(Harām)* to look at little boys and beardless youngsters when one fears that it could lead to sin. This will occur when one enjoys looking at them. Casting looks at Unlawful *(Harām)* things is a grave sin that pollutes the heart and destroys the enjoyment of worship. On the contrary, diverting such gazes will cause a person to feel the sweetness of his worship. [*Mishkāt p. 270*]

Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Allāh's curse is on the one who looks as well as the one who is looked at." [*Ibid*]

This hadith spells out that those people who make a spectacle of themselves, causing Unlawful *(Harām)* gazes to fall on them, are also cursed by Allāh. It especially refers to dancers and others who attract gazes towards themselves as they perform on stage.

When a man stares at a woman who walks in the marketplaces without veil *(Hijāb)*, they are both cursed. Women who look at men also fall under Allāh's curse. When the groom comes into the house of the bride and sits among the non-mahram members of the bride's family, they (including him) are all inviting Allāh's curse upon themselves.

If a woman exposes any part of her body (that shoud not be shown) to another woman, both become deserving of Allāh's curse. The same will apply to men seeing the private parts of each other, as well as to a mahram man seeing any part of a mahram woman (besides his wife) that he is not supposed to see.

It is indeed tragic that many Muslims, being influenced by the mode of the West, dress in such a manner that certain forbidden parts of their bodies are exposed in their homes. In this way they are inviting Allāh's curse and wrath upon the entire household.

وَأَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْأَيَٰمَىٰ مِنكُمْ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَآئِكُمْ ۚ إِن يَكُونُوا۟ فُقَرَآءَ يُغْنِهِمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَلْيَسْتَعْفِفِ ٱلَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ

(32) Marry those from you who are unmarried and those slave men and women who are righteous. If they are poor then Allāh will make each of them wealthy by His grace. Allāh is of ample means, All Knowing. (33) Those who are unable to marry should preserve their chastit· until Allāh grants them both independence through His grace.

THE NECESSITY OF MARRIAGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING ONE'S HONOUR AND CHASTITY

The above verse encourages the marriage of those who are unmarried. This applies to those who may never have been married before and to those who may be divorced or widowed. Since being unmarried could lead to one being overcome by his or her passions, Islām encourages people to marry and has promised great reward for it. Marriage serves as a fortress against sin and unlawful lust.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a person marries, he has completed half of his religion *(D'īn)*. He should thereafter strive for the other half by fearing Allāh." [*Mishkāt p. 268*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "O youth! Those of you who have the ability should marry because marriage is a means of lowering the gazes and protecting the chastity. Those who cannot should fast because fasting suppresses the passions." [*Bukhari v. 2 p. 708*]

Castration and permanent birth control measures are not allowed in the Shari'ah because Allāh has granted man the ability to reproduce so that the human race can survive. Muslim parents are expected to produce Muslim children and these will increase the Ummah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Therefore, one cannot resort to means that terminate this ability to reproduce.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned, "Marry women who are loving and who can bear children because I will boast (about your numbers) before the other Ummahs on the Day of Judgement." [*Abu Dawūd v. 1 p. 280*]

Sayyidina Uthmān bin Madh'ūn رضي الله عنه once requested permission from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to castrate himself. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "The one who castrates another and the one who has himself castrated are not from us. The castration of my Ummah is in fasting."

Marriage is normally Sunnah. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that four practices were common among all the Prophets عليهم السلام. These are (1) modesty, (2) applying perfume, (3) using the Miswāk and (4) marriage. [*Tirmidhi*]

The jurists have mentioned that marriage is Compulsory (obligatory) for the person who has the means to marry and feels that he will be unable to control his sexual passions and gazes. However, if he is unable to marry or cannot find a wife, he should fast. It will never be permissible for him to engage in sin in any if these circumstances.

Modesty is one of the demands of Belief *(Imān)* and it is because of this inherent modesty that people are generally shy to look for their own partners. It will therefore be the duty of the parents or guardians to seek a partner for their sons and daughters. This is ordained in the above verse, where Allāh says, *"Marry those from you who are unmarried..."* i.e. get them married.

People have made marriage a burden for themselves today and, instead of seeking pious partners for their children, they look for people who are worldly and who have high positions in this world. As a result, some women are still unmarried when they reach an advanced age. These women then look for their own partners, look for a disbeliever court and contract their own marriage. Then the parents wail and lament over this.

At times, these marriages are not even recognised by the Shari'ah, causing the couple to live in sin and to bear illegitimate children. All this sin and vice are caused by the same wailing parents.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you receive a marriage proposal from a person whose religious and moral integrity pleases you, then get him married. If you fail to do this, then extensive corruption will prevail on earth." [*Tirmidhi*]

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه also reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, *"A woman is married for four reasons. (1) For her wealth, (2) for her family lineage, (3) for her beauty and (4) for her religiousness. So marry the woman of religiousness and be successful. May Allāh grant you understanding."* [*Bukhari*]

These two Ahadīth teach people to seek partners who are religiously inclined. It is indeed unfortunate that people squander large sums of money and time on extravagant weddings, delaying the function indefinitely. All this because their pride will not allow them to host simple functions. They fail to realise that the daughter of the greatest man on earth was married in the simplest manner. When they are reminded of this, they excuse themselves by saying that times have changed and that no person can marry today without a lavish function.

They do not realise that they are merely emulating the disbelievers, when they should rather be following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Without doubt, the most blessed marriage is the one with the least expenses." [*Mishkāt p. 268*]

After commanding the marriage of free people, Allāh then says that Muslims should also be concerned to arrange the marrying of *"those slave men and women who are righteous."* Certain commentators have interpreted the verse to refer to those slaves who are capable of marrying. Whatever the interpretation, it will be Mustahab for a master to seek a partner for his or her slave. The details of

marriage pertaining to slaves are mentioned in the books of jurisprudence.

"If they are poor then Allāh will make each of them wealthy by His grace. Allāh is of ample means, All Knowing." Allāh promises people in this verse that He will grant them financial assistance when they marry. They should never fear poverty, but should marry when the opportunity presents itself.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضي الله عنه reports from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that Allāh has assumed the responsibility of assisting the following three persons:

1. *The Mukātab slave who intends to repay his master.*
2. *The person who intends to marry to preserve his chastity.*
3. *The person who strives in Allāh's way. [Nasaī]*

"Those who are unable to marry (because of a lack of resources) should preserve their chastity until Allāh grants them both independence through His grace." These people should never think that they will be permitted to fornicate until they are able to marry. They should be patient and keep fasting until Allāh opens the way for them.

وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَآتُوهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتَيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِتَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْهُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (33) وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ آيَاتٍ مُبَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَثَلًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمَوْعِظَةً لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (34)

(33) (contd.) You should enter into the contract of "Kitābah," with those slaves of yours who desire to enter into it if you know of any good in them. Give them from Allāh 's wealth, which He has given to you. And do not force your slave women into prostitution when they wish to remain chaste, merely to seek the commodities of this world. Whoever forces them, then, after his duress, Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (34) We have surely revealed clear laws to you, some narratives of those who passed before you, and advice for those who have piety (taqwa).

THE INSTRUCTION TO ENTER INTO THE CONTRACT OF "KITĀBAH" WITH ONE'S SLAVES

There are innumerable laws pertaining to slaves, which are found in the books of Ahadīth and Islāmic jurisprudence. One of these is called "Kitābah" or "Mukātabah." This means that the master and slave enter into a contract whereby the slave has to gradually pay the master a certain sum to secure his freedom. The slave will then be free to earn money and he/she will be called a "Mukātab."

The two may agree on a time period within which the sum will be paid in instalments. Otherwise, the slave may also take a loan from someone else to pay the master in cash. When the sum (or the last instalment) is paid to the master,

the slave immediately becomes a free man/woman.

If the slave is unable to pay the sum, or decides to return to slavery, he/she will again be the slave of the master as before.

"Durrul Manthūr" (v. 5 p. 45) reports that a slave by the name of Subay was refused Kitābah by his master, Sayyidina Huwaytib bin Abdil Uzza رضي الله عنه. It was then that the above verse was revealed viz. *"You should enter into the contract of 'Kitābah,' with those slaves of yours who desire to enter into it..."*

This has also been reported in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 342*) with the addition that the master then stipulated a sum of a hundred dinārs, twenty of which he later remitted. The slave Subay was also a Sahabi رضي الله عنه and was martyred in the battle of Hunain.

Since the verse contains a command to contract the deal, Sayyidina Ata and Umar bin Dinār رحمة الله عليه say that it is Compulsory for the master to enter into this contract when the slave requests to be freed for a sum that is equal to or more than his price. However, they say that the master is not obliged to enter into the contract when the slave wants freedom for a sum that is less than his or her purchase price.

However, the vast majority of jurists state that the master is not obliged to enter into the contract. It will be best if he did, but he will not be sinful if he refuses. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Allāh adds the condition *'if you know of any good in them."* About the meaning of *"any good"* "Durrul Manthūr" has reported from Abu Dawūd and Bayhaqi that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم interpreted this phrase as "any skill." This means that if the master knows that the slave knows any skill by which he can earn, he should be permitted to do so. He should not be permitted to beg from people.

"Durrul Manthūr" also reports that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه did not make a certain slave of his a Mukātab until he was capable of earning. He used to say, "(If I were to let him earn while he was incapable of earning) I would be eating the filth of people (i.e. what the slave got by begging from people)."

The hadith has already been mentioned which states that Allāh will certainly assist the Mukātab to pay his debt. He should therefore earn only what is Permissible *(Halāl)*.

Other commentators have interpreted *"any good"* as being the fact that the slave performs all his Salāh. However, this does not seem correct because it would mean that a disbeliever cannot be a Mukātab, whereas a disbeliever can be one.

Others have interpreted *"any good"* to mean that the master is sure that, after freedom, the slave will not be a burden and menace to society. He should only be made a Mukātab when the master is certain of this that the slave poses no threat to society. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 18 p. 155*]

"Give them from Allāh's wealth, which He has given to you." "Ma'ālimut

Tanzīl" has reported that, according to Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Uthmān رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Zubair رضي الله عنه, and Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه, this verse means that the master must remit a portion of the Mukātab's debt. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه says that he must remit a quarter of it, while Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that it should be a third. Imām Shafi'ī رحمة الله عليه and others say that the master has the choice to decide how much he wants to remit.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه remitted 5000 Dirhams from his Mukātab's original sum of 35 000. Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه used to remit a fixed portion from the instalments of his Mukātabs and then remit an unspecified part of the final instalment.

Another interpretation of the above verse is that it is addressed to all the Muslims, not only to masters of slaves. This means that all Muslims should assist Mukātabs to pay off their debts.

According to other commentators, it means that people should give Zakāh to these Mukātabs because they have been cited as one of the recipients of Zakāh in Surah Taubah [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 3 43*]

Sayyidina Barā bin Āzib رضي الله عنه reports that a villager once requested the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to inform him of a deed that would admit him into Heaven *(Jannah)*. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "Free a soul or a neck." The person asked, "Are these two not the same?"

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, "No Freeing a soul means that you free a slave from your possession, while freeing a neck means that you assist one to pay their price." [*Mishkāt p. 393*]

Allāma Jassās رحمة الله عليه writes in "Ahkāmul Qur'ān" (*v. 3 p. 322*) that the master is not obliged to remit any part of the slave's debt. Of course, it will be considered an act of virtue if he did. He quotes this ruling from the likes of Imām Abu Hanīfah, Imām Abu Yusuf, Imām Muhammad, Imām Zafar, Imām Mālik and Imām Sufyān Thowri رحمة الله عليه. He also cites their proofs, which 'refute the stance of those who say that it is obligatory to remit a part of it.

"And- do not force your slave women into prostitution when they wish to remain chaste, merely to seek the commodities of this world." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that people were accustomed to the vile trade of prostitution during the period of ignorance. There were numerous brothels and women used to become very wealthy plying this trade.

Many people forced their slave women to become prostitutes, thereby earning the money paid to these women. However, Islām forbade prostitution and the money received from it [Muslim]. "Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 5 p. 46*) reports several narrations about how the leader of the Hypocrites, Abdullāh bin Ubayy, was averse to this law because of his deep involvement in prostitution.

When the law prohibiting adultery was revealed, some of his slave women refused to continue as prostitutes for him, after which he savagely beat them up. It was then that the above verse was revealed.

Although the verse says that these women cannot be forced to be prostitutes

"when they wish to remain chaste," it does not mean that they can be forced to do this when they do not wish to be chaste. Islām forbids all types of fornication, even if both parties are willing. These words are included in this verse because it referred to the incident of Abdullāh bin Ubayy, who claimed to be a Muslim.

"Whoever forces them, then, after his duress, Allāh is certainly Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." This part of the verse means that Allāh will forgive those slave women who are still forced by their masters and cannot resist them.

"We have surely revealed clear laws to you, some narratives of those who passed before you (so that you may take a lesson from these), and advice for those who have piety (taqwa)" Although the Qur'ān has been revealed for all people, those who have piety *(taqwa)* will benefit the most from it.

ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشۡكَوٰةٖ فِيهَا مِصۡبَاحٌۖ ٱلۡمِصۡبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍۖ ٱلزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوۡكَبٞ دُرِّيّٞ يُوقَدُ مِن شَجَرَةٖ مُّبَٰرَكَةٖ زَيۡتُونَةٖ لَّا شَرۡقِيَّةٖ وَلَا غَرۡبِيَّةٖ يَكَادُ زَيۡتُهَا يُضِيٓءُ وَلَوۡ لَمۡ تَمۡسَسۡهُ نَارٞۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٖۚ يَهۡدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَيَضۡرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ﴿٣٥﴾

(35) Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His Light is like that of a niche in which there is a lamp. The lamp is within a glass, and the glass appears to be a shining star. The lamp is lit with the blessed tree of the olive, which is neither easterly nor westerly. The oil is close to burning even though a fire does not touch it. Light upon light. Allāh guides to His light whoever He desires, and Allāh coins similitude's for people. Allāh has knowledge of all things.

ALLĀH ILLUMINATES THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

"Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth." Commentators interpret this verse to mean that Allāh illuminates the heavens and the earth, both externally and internally. Adding to the illumination of the heavens is the constant remembrance *(Dhikr)* and glorification *(Tasbīh)* of the angels, whereas the earth derives illumination from the efforts of the Prophets عليهم السلام in spreading the celestial light of guidance. It is the light of Belief *(Imān)* that ensures the survival of the heavens and the earth. Therefore, Belief *(Imān)* becomes the light of the heavens and the earth.

"The example of His Light is like that of a niche in which there is a lamp. The lamp is within a glass, and the glass (because of its brilliance) appears to be a shining star." The lamp is, in itself, illuminating. However, its radiance is supplemented by the clarity and amplification of the glass casing.

Added to this, the lamp is not fuelled by oil from any ordinary tree, but *"The lamp is lit with the blessed tree of the olive, which is neither easterly nor westerly."* This means that this tree benefits from the heat of the sun all day long because it never falls into any shadow. It grows on an open plain, receiving constant

sunlight. The result of this is that olive oil burns very brightly and clearly. In fact, it is so volatile that *"The oil is close to burning even though a fire does not touch it."*

The conglomeration of all these contributing factors causes the scenario to be described as *"Light upon light."* Sayyidina Hasan رحمة الله عليه and Sayyidina Zaid bin Aslam رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to the Qur'ān, while Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه is of the opinion that it denotes the personality of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه say that the verse refers to the light that is instilled into the hearts of all Believers *(Mu'minīn)*, whereby they are guided. This is referred to in Surah Zumar, where Allāh says, *"Or the person whose heart Allāh has opened to Islām, because of which he is upon a light from his Lord?"* [*Surah 39, verse 22*]

Other commentators say that the verse refers to obedience. The author of "bayānul Qur'ān" says that Allāh illuminates the heart of a believer *(Mu'min)* with the light of guidance. The effect of this is that his heart becomes ever more receptive towards the injunctions of the Shari'ah. He is then ready to practise any command of Allāh, even though he may not have knowledge of them all. This is so because attaining knowledge is a gradual process and cannot be attained all at once.

Therefore, just as olive oil is ready for burning even before it is lit, the believer *(Mu'min)* is ready to practise even before attaining the necessary knowledge. When he does attain the knowledge, the light of practice is immediately ignited by the resolve to do so. In this manner, when knowledge is supplemented by practice, the display of *"Light upon light"* is achieved. After attaining knowledge of any action, the believer *(Mu'min)* does not delay in the least.

This very light has been described in the verse *"Or the person whose heart Allāh has opened to Islām, because of which he is upon a light from his Lord?"* [*Surah Zumar (39), verse 22*]

This is also referred to in the verse, *"Whoever Allāh wishes to guide, He expands his bosom for Islām."* [*Surah An'ām (6), verse 125*]

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had the following to say after reciting the verse, *"Whoever Allāh wishes to guide, He expands his bosom for Islām."* He said, "Verily, when the light is placed within the heart, it spreads." The Sahabah رضي الله عنهم enquired, "Is there some sign by which this can be recognised?"

"Yes," the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, *"that a person distances himself from the 'place of deception' (this world), that he turns his attention towards the 'place of permanence'* [*the Hereafter (the Ākhirah)*] *and that he prepares for death beforehand. This is the sign of this light."* [*Mishkāt p. 446*]

"Allāh guides to His light whoever He desires..." Only Allāh guides a person to Belief *(Imān)* and to perform good deeds. The person then finds pleasure in forsaking his desires and engaging in good deeds.

"..... and Allāh coins similitude's for people." Allāh does this so that abstract

subjects may be understood by examples of concrete objects. Allāh will grant people their due rewards or punishment because *"Allāh has knowledge of all things."*

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ ٱللَّهُ أَن تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا ٱسْمُهُۥ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُۥ فِيهَا بِٱلْغُدُوِّ وَٱلْءَاصَالِ
﴿٣٦﴾ رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَٰرَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَن ذِكْرِ ٱللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ ٱلصَّلَوٰةِ وَإِيتَآءِ ٱلزَّكَوٰةِ يَخَافُونَ
يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ ٱلْقُلُوبُ وَٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ ﴿٣٧﴾ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا۟ وَيَزِيدَهُم
مِّن فَضْلِهِۦ وَٱللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

(36) In homes concerning which Allāh has commanded that reverence be shown and His name be mentioned, there are people who glorify Him morning and evening. (37) Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, the establishment of Salāh and the paying of Zakāh. They fear a day when their hearts and eyes will be overturned. (38) So that Allāh may reward them with the best of rewards for their deeds and grant them an increase from His bounty. Allāh sustains whoever He wills without count.

THE PIOUS PEOPLE FEAR FROM THE DAY OF JUDGMENT *(QIYĀMAH)* AND DO NOT ALLOW TRADE AND COMMERCE TO DISTRACT THEM FROM REMEMBRANCE *(DHIKR)*, SALĀH AND ZAKĀH

The above verses laude the *(Mosques)* Masājid (plural of Masjid) and the people associated with the Masājid. The author of "Jalālain" interprets these verses to mean that the *"people who glorify Him (Allāh) morning and evening"* in "homes concerning which Allāh has commanded that reverence be shown and His name be mentioned" are the very same *'Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, the establishment of Salāh and the paying of Zakāh."*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that the *"homes"* referred to in the verse are the Masājid. Allāma Baghawi رحمة الله عليه says in "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" that the glorification of Allāh *"day and night"* refers to the five daily Salāh. The Fajr Salāh is performed during the morning and the other Salāh are all performed after midday. The times of all the other Salāh can fall within the purport of the Arabic word "āsāl" (translated above as *"evening")*. However, other commentators are of the opinion that the verse refers only to the Fajr and Asr Salāh.

Whichever Salāh may be referred to, the fact is that the verse praises those men who, in the Masājid, *"glorify Him day and night."* They are *"Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, the establishment of Salāh and the paying of Zakāh."* They carry out all these duties despite their involvement in business.

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه was once in the market place when, at the time of Salāh, all the shops began to

close for Salāh. Seeing this, Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Umar رضي الله عنه said that these are surely the people regarding whom Allāh says, *"Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, the establishment of Salāh and the paying of Zakāh."*

There are very few businessmen who will sacrifice their love for wealth for their love for Salāh at the time of Asr, when their businesses are booming and the customers come pouring into their shops. This is a true test for them.

The verse makes mention of Zakāh after Salāh. This indicates that these people do not allow the love of their wealth to deter them from paying the full Zakāh due from them. Many people do not pay their Zakāh at all, while others pay less than the due amount.

There are people who gleefully pay Zakāh when it is a matter of a few coppers. However, when thousands or hundreds of thousands are due from them, they shrink away from the obligation, thinking that it is too much. However, they fail to realise that Allāh had given them all that they possess and asks for only 2,5% as Zakāh. If He had willed, He could have commanded them to give all their wealth away or could even destroy their wealth. The intelligent believer *(Mu'min)* realises that he will be rewarded by paying zakāh and that the zakāh will even ensure the protection of his wealth.

Further describing the pious people, Allāh says, *"They fear a day when their hearts and eyes will be overturned."* i.e. they fear that they will be summoned to reckon for all their deeds on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah).*

Allāh says in Surah Ibrahīm, *"He is only granting them respite until a day when gazes will be fixed upwards. They will running with their heads fixed upwards, their gazes never returning to them. And their hearts will be empty."* [*Surah 14, verses 42, 43*]

Those who are apprehensive of the Day of Judgement will ensure that they carry out all the duties that are obligatory upon them and will abstain from all sins.

Allāh says in Surah Mu'minūn, *"...those who spend of what they have been granted and whose hearts tremble because they have to return to their Lord."* Sayyidah Ayshah رضي الله عنها once asked the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم whether this verse referred to those who drink liquor and steal. He replied by telling her that it referred to those people who performed Salāh, fasted and spent in charity. However, they always fear that Allāh will not accept their deeds. Allāh says regarding such people, *'These people hasten to perform good deeds and are the forerunners in this.'"* [*Mishkāt p. 457*]

Note: *"In homes concerning which Allāh has commanded that reverence be shown and His name be mentioned."* Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه has interpreted this verse to mean that Allāh has commanded men to build such Masājid. Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that it refers to respecting these places by not carrying out any act there that is contrary to its noble status. [*"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl"*]

Among the etiquette of the Masājid is that they must be kept clean, no evil poetry should be recited there, no trade should take place there, no lost items should be announced there, no raw garlic or onions should be consumed before

entering them, nor should worldly talks take place there, etc.

Among the activities of the Masājid are that Adhān is given there, Salāh is performed, I'tikāf (*sechusion for worship*) is performed, Islāmic knowledge is imparted, recitation of the Qur'ān takes place, etc. All these have been encouraged in the Ahādīth.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'īd Khudri رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you see that a person is attached to the Masjid, then attest to his Belief *(Imān)* because Allāh says, *"Only those should tend Allāh 's places of worship who believe in Allāh, and the Last Day, establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and fear Allāh only."* [*Mishkāt p. 69*]

Note: *"Men whom neither trade nor commerce distracts from the remembrance of Allāh, the establishment of Salāh and the paying of Zakāh."* Certain Scholars *(Ulama)* have deduced from this verse that the various activities of the Masjid are reserved for men only. Although the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted women to attend the Masjid, he said, "Their homes are best for women."

Abu Dawūd (*v. 1 p. 84*) reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised that the most secluded part of a woman's home is best for her to perform her Salāh.

Allāh concludes by saying, *"So that Allāh may reward them with the best of rewards for their deeds and grant them an increase from His bounty. Allāh sustains whoever He wills without count."*

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ
شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾ أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ
لُجِّيٍّ يَغْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ ۚ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا
أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكَدْ يَرَاهَا ۗ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

(39) The deeds of the disbelievers are like a mirage on a barren plain that a thirsty person thinks to be water. Until, when he approaches it, he finds nothing. He finds only Allāh's decision there, after which Allāh grants him his full due. Allāh is Swift in reckoning. (40) Or like the multiple darkness beneath a deep ocean. There covers him a wave, above which is another wave, above which there is a cloud. Darkness upon darkness. He is unable to see his own hand when he extends it before himself. There can be no light for the one for whom Allāh has not ordained any light.

THE DEEDS OF THE DISBELIEVERS ARE LIKE A MIRAGE

The disbelievers carry out many good deeds in this world like charity, assisting the needy and the animals, erecting hospitals and water wells, etc. They think that these deeds will benefit them in the Hereafter, but it will not be so. In the above verses Allāh describes the plight of these disbelievers by citing two

similitude's.

The first is that of a person who has been lost in the wilderness. The extreme heat and depletion of water resources have made him extremely thirsty. Far off, he sees a mirage and, thinking it to be water, hastens to it. However, to his dismay, he finds nothing upon arrival. In the same way, the disbeliever thinks that he will be rewarded in the Hereafter for his good deeds. However, because he did not possess Belief *(Imān)*, he will be dismally disappointed when he is not rewarded for these deeds in the Hereafter.

Allāh says in Surah Furqān, *"We will then turn to their deeds and reduce it to scattered dust."* However, they will not be completely deprived of the reward for their good deeds and will be rewarded in this world.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "A deliever *(Mu'min)* will never be oppressed even about a single good deed. He will be rewarded in this world and in the Hereafter. However, the disbeliever will be rewarded in this world for all the deeds he does for Allāh. He will be rewarded until there is nothing left for him to receive in the Hereafter." [*Muslim*]

Allāh says further about the disbeliever's aspiration for reward, *"Until, when he approaches it, he finds nothing. He finds only Allāh's decision there, after which Allāh grants him his full due (in this world). Allāh is Swift in reckoning."*

Allāh then cites that second similitude when He says, *"Or like the multiple darkness beneath a deep ocean. There covers him a wave, above which is another wave, above which there is a cloud. Darkness upon darkness. He is unable to see his own hand when he extends it before himself"* In a similar way, the Disbeliever, being swamped in darkness, will never see the rewards for his deeds in the Hereafter.

Ibn Kathīr (*v.3 p.296*) says that the first similitude is that of those disbelievers who are fooled by the belief that they will be rewarded for their deeds. The second example is of those people who blindly follow their leaders, having no clue about the condition of these leaders and about where they are being led.

Other commentators state that the first similitude describes those disbelievers who believe in the Hereafter and hope that they will be rewarded there. The second similitude describes those disbelievers who do not believe in the Hereafter at all. They do not even have the hope of attaining rewards. Therefore, they do not carry out any good deeds and are in total darkness.

"Darkness upon darkness." Ibn Kathīr reports from Sayyidina Ubay bin Ka'b رضي الله عنه that the disbeliever is immersed in five darknesses. His word is darkness, his deed is darkness, his entry into any building is darkness, his exit is darkness, and, on the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, he will be entered into the eternal darkness of Hell.

"There can be no light for the one for whom Allāh has not ordained any light." The disbeliever will dwell in darkness forever. This verse is the antithesis of the verse *"Allāh guides to His light whomsoever He desires..."* as well as the verse *"Or the person whose heart Allāh has opened to Islām, because of which he is upon a light from his Lord?"* [*Surah 39, verse 22*]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَن فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرُ صَافَّاتٍ ۖ كُلٌّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ
وَتَسْبِيحَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ (41) وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ
(42) أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُزْجِي سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ
خِلَالِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِن بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَن مَّن
يَشَاءُ ۖ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ (43) يُقَلِّبُ اللَّهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ
لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ (44) وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِ وَمِنْهُم
مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ أَرْبَعٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ
شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (45)

(41) Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out? Each one knows its Salāh and method of glorification. And Allāh has knowledge of what you do. (42) To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and to Him shall be the return. (43) Do you not see that Allāh wafts the clouds, then condenses them and stacks them in layers, after which you will see rain falling from between them? Then, from the mountainous clouds in the sky, Allāh showers down some ice, by which He strikes whoever He wills and averts from whoever He wills. The flash of His lightning can well nigh snatch away eyesight. (44) Allāh orchestrates the alternation of the night and the day. There is undoubtedly a sign in this for those with foresight. (45) Allāh created every creature from water. Of these, there are those who crawl on their bellies. There are those that walk on two legs and those that walk on four. Allāh creates what He wills. Allāh certainly has power over all things.

ALL THE INHABITANTS OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH ENGAGE IN GLORIFYING ALLĀH, EACH KNOWING ITS SPECIFIC METHOD

Allāh describes His creative power and His authority in these verses. However, He begins by describing the subservience of the creation to Him. Allāh says, *"Do you not see that everyone in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allāh, including the birds with their wings spread out?"* They all attest to Allāh's purity from all defects and associates. The fact that the birds are able to glide and hover in the air without falling is a testimony to Allāh's immense creative powers.

All these creatures glorify Allāh in their own peculiar ways. Some do so verbally because Allāh has granted them the capability to speak or make sounds. In fact the very existence of all these creatures indicate that Allāh is The Greatest, for He has created them all and still continues to exercise supreme authority over them.

Humans, angels and the jinn have more sense and intelligence than other creatures, while the animals have these to a higher degree than plants and inanimate objects. However, they all actively engage in Allāh's glorification and worship even though man cannot perceive this.

Speaking of the rocks, Allāh says in Surah Baqarah, *"Then there are even those that fall because of fear for Allāh."* [*Surah 2, verse 74*]

Allāh says in Surah Hajj, *"Do you not see that all within the heavens and the earth prostrate to Allāh?"* One should refer to the commentary of these two verses for a deeper understanding of the subject at hand.

"Each one (of Allāh's creation) *knows its Salāh and method of glorification."* Some commentators have interpreted the word "Salāh" to mean "prayer *(du'ā)*." However, Salāh could also refer to a special form of worship that every creation engages in, just as man performs his Salāh in a particular way. Allāh says in Surah Bani Isrā'īl, *"There is nothing that does not glorify His praises, but you do not understand their glorification."* [*Surah 17, verse 44*]

Certain commentators have interpreted the meaning of *"Salāh and method of glorification"* as "obedience and submission to Allāh." This means that every creation carries out the duty it was created for just as they are commanded by Allāh.

What about those disbelievers who do not accept the divinity of Allāh? How can it be said that they also glorify Allāh? In reply to this question, it may be said that the very existence of these people is ample evidence of Allāh's divinity. Other commentators reply by saying that this verse is intended as an admonition to these people. It tells them that they are the only ingrates who are not glorifying Allāh.

Allāh then says that He *"has knowledge of what you do."* He knows of the detailed deeds carried out by the disbelievers and the Muslims. Accordingly, He will reward and punish them.

"To Allāh belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and to Him shall be the return." The leaders of this world merely appear to have command over their territories. However, Allāh makes the final decision in every matter, especially in the Hereafter.

Allāh then describes the authority that He yields in the skies. He says, *"Do you not see that Allāh wafts the clouds, then condenses them and stacks them in layers, after which you will see rain falling from between them. Then, from the mountainous clouds in the sky, Allāh showers down some* (destructive) *ice, by which He strikes whoever He wills and averts from whoever He wills."*

Allāh then mentions His immense power seen in one of His creation. Allāh says, *"The flash of His lightning can well nigh snatch away eyesight."* Lightning can also kill people and destroy property.

"Allāh orchestrates the alternation of the night and the day." Although it appears that the sun and the moon function on their own, they are in Allāh's control, causing the night and the day to follow each other.

"There is undoubtedly a sign in this for those with foresight." These people will look for Allāh's power and realise that He is the Creator of everything. However, those who choose to remain blind to all of this cannot expect to be guided.

After describing His power and control of the skies, Allāh speaks of His authority on earth. Allāh says, *"Allāh created every creature from water* (i.e. from a drop of semen). *Of these there are those who crawl on their bellies* (like snakes). *There are those that walk on two legs* (like men, birds, etc) *and those that walk on four. Allāh creates what He wills."*

Allāh creates the various creatures of the world in whatever fashion, colour, dimensions and properties He pleases. For example, He has granted the lizard the ability to walk on ceilings whereas other creatures would fall down if they tried. In a like manner, every creature has its own peculiarities. All this clearly tells us that *"Allāh certainly has power over all things.*

It may be said that all creatures are not created from a drop of semen, neither was Sayyidina Ādam عليه السلام created in this manner. Therefore, how can it be said that *"Allāh created every creature from water?"* Commentators say that the verse speaks for the majority, since most creatures reproduce in this manner.

Other commentators say that Allāh initially created water. Thereafter He created fire from this water (to create the jinn), light from this water (to create the angels) and sand as well (to create human beings). *["Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" v. 3 p. 351 and "Ruhul Ma'āni" v. 18 p. 193]*

لَّقَدْ أَنزَلْنَآ ءَايَٰتٍ مُّبَيِّنَٰتٍ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَيَقُولُونَ
ءَامَنَّا بِٱللَّهِ وَبِٱلرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مِّنۢ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ
بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَإِذَا دُعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾
وَإِن يَكُن لَّهُمُ ٱلْحَقُّ يَأْتُوٓاْ إِلَيْهِ مُذْعِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾ أَفِى قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَمِ ٱرْتَابُوٓاْ أَمْ يَخَافُونَ أَن
يَحِيفَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ۚ بَلْ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

(46) We have certainly revealed clearly explicit signs. Allāh guides whoever He wills to the straight path. (47) They say, "We believe in Allāh and the messenger and we obey. Thereafter a group from them turns away. These are not believers. (48) When they are summoned to Allāh and His messenger so that he may decide between them, a party from them are suddenly averse. (49) If any of their rights are due, they would come to him willingly. (50) Is there a disease in their hearts, are they doubtful, or do they fear that Allāh and His apostle will oppress them? Nay! They are indeed the oppressors.

THE HYPOCRITES REFUSE TO SUBMIT TO THE JUDGEMENT OF ALLĀH AND THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

"We have certainly revealed clearly explicit signs." These signs are self-explanatory and need no further elucidation to reveal that they point to Allāh's

divinity. However, there are still those who refuse to hearken and wander further astray because *"Allāh guides whomsoever He wills to the straight path."*

To fully understand the following four verses, one should be aware of a few incidents. One of these was stated in the commentary of verses 60 and 61 of Surah Nisā (Surah 4), where Allāh says, *"Have you seen those who claim to believe in that which was revealed to you and to those before you, yet they seek judgement from Satan (Shaytān) whereas they have been instructed to reject him? Satan (Shaytān) desires to mislead them far astray. When it is said to them, 'Come to that which Allāh has revealed and towards the messenger,' you will see the hypocrites turning from you with aversion."* The incident related to this verse concerned a hypocrite by the name of Bishr.

"Ruhul Ma'āni" reports an incident about a hypocrite by the name of Mughiera bin Wā'il, who had a dispute with Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه concerning a piece of land. The two eventually settled the dispute and were happy to distribute the land between themselves. It later transpired that Mughiera requested Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه to sell him his portion of the land. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه sold it to him and the two concluded the deal amicably. It was only later that someone indoctrinated Mughiera into believing that the land was salty and uncultivable.

Mughiera came back to Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه and asked him to revoke the deal and refund the price to him. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه told him that he was unable to do so and that Mughiera had purchased the land with knowledge of its condition. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه then offered to refer the matter to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for judgement. Mughiera refused to go to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, saying that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم hated him and would oppress him. It was then that the above verses were revealed.

Although the incident concerned one Hypocrite, Allāh speaks of them collectively because they are all the same and are allies of one another.

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه reports from Sayyidina Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه that whenever the Hypocrites were summoned to appear before the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, they would do so only when they were convinced that he would pass judgement in their favour. If they intended to usurp the property of another, they would decline from presenting themselves and would refer the issue to another person. Allāh revealed the above verses with reference them.

Allāh says, *"They (the Hypocrites) say, 'We believe in Allāh and the messenger and we obey.' Thereafter a group from them turns away. These are not believers (but hypocrites, because their deeds betray their true identity)."*

"When they are summoned to Allāh and His messenger so that he may decide between them, a party from them are suddenly averse." They are averse because they know that they are at fault and that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would pass Judgement against them.

However, *"If any of their rights are due, they would come to him willingly."* Their only objective is to attain the commodities of this world. Therefore, they will present themselves to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم only when they stand to benefit in this regard.

Allāh asks further, *"Is there a disease in their hearts* (i.e. the disbelief in the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as being Allāh's messenger), *are they doubtful, or do they fear that Allāh and His apostle will oppress them? Nay! They are indeed the oppressors."* None of the above is true, but the Hypocrites absent themselves because only they know that they are at fault. They merely intend to usurp the wealth of others.

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوٓاْ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن يَقُولُواْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَاۚ وَأُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَخْشَ ٱللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهِ فَأُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

(51) When the believers are summoned to appear before Allāh and His messenger so that he may pass judgment between them, all they say is, "We hear and we obey." These are the successful ones. (52) The successful ones are those who obey Allāh and His apostle, who fear Allāh and do not disobey Him.

THE BELIEVERS *(MU'MINĪN)* SHALL BE SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THEY RESPOND TO THE CALL OF ALLĀH AND HIS MESSENGER *(RASUL)* صلى الله عليه وسلم BY SAYING, "WE HEAR AND WE OBEY"

After describing the negative attitude of the hypocrites, Allāh depicts the opposite in the above verses. Allāh speaks of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. He says, *"When the believers are summoned to appear before Allāh and His messenger so that he may pass judgement between them, all they say is, 'We hear and we obey."' Allāh declares, "These are the successful ones."*

"The successful ones are those who obey Allāh and His apostle, who fear Allāh and do not disobey Him." In this verse, Allāh enumerates four qualities of the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Firstly, they never fail in obeying all Allāh's commandments. Secondly, they obey the instructions issued by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. These two attributes include carrying out all the Faraidh, Compulsories and even the etiquette and Mustahabbāt of religion *(D'īn)*. It also includes abstaining from all the prohibitions forbidden in the Shari'ah.

To emphasise this, Allāh also adds fearing Him and abstention from sin as additional qualities exclusive to the believers *(Mu'minīn)*. Being successful means that they will be rescued from Hell. Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Whoever is saved from the fire and entered into Heaven (Jannah) shall truly be successful."* [*Surah Āl Imrān (3), verse 185*]

Allāma Ibn Kathīr رحمة الله عليه quotes Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه as saying that fear of Allāh means that a person should be fearful of the consequences of his previous sins, while the latter part of the verse (*"disobey Him"*) refers to committing any future sins.

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ أَمَرْتَهُمْ لَيَخْرُجُنَّ قُلْ لَا تُقْسِمُوا طَاعَةٌ مَعْرُوفَةٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ (53) قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ (54)

(53) They swear solemn oaths in Allāh's name, saying that if you command them they will certainly leave their homes. Tell them, "Do not swear. Obedience can be recognised. Allāh is surely Informed of what you do." (54) Say, "Obey Allāh and obey the messenger." If they turn away, then the messenger is responsible only for what he has been entrusted with and you people are responsible for what you have been entrusted with. If you obey, you will be rightly guided. The messenger is responsible only for clear propagation.

THE FALSE OATHS OF THE HYPOCRITES TO BE OBEDIENT

Referring to the hypocrites, Allāh says, *"They swear solemn oaths in Allāh's name, saying that if you command them they will certainly leave their homes."* This is the interpretation of Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه. Other commentators say that the oath refers to marching in Jihād.

Allāh says, *"Tell them, 'Do not swear. Obedience can be recognised."* This means that a person does not have to take an oath when he is sincere. Oaths betray a lack of sincerity and the hypocrites were certainly false in these oaths. The Muslims knew that they merely offered lip service and would never uphold their oaths. Their true colours will be exposed on the inevitable Day of Judgement because *"Allāh is surely Informed of what you do."*

"Say (to the Hypocrites), 'Obey Allāh and obey the messenger. If they turn away, then the messenger (will suffer no loss because he) is responsible only for what he has been entrusted with (i.e. propagation) and you people are responsible for what you have been entrusted with (i.e. obedience and submission)."

"If you obey, you will be rightly guided (if not, you will suffer the consequences). *The messenger is responsible only for clear propagation."* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has fulfilled his task, leaving people to fulfil theirs. Like the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, those after him are entrusted only with the same task and are not obliged to force people to respond.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (55) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

(55) Allāh has promised those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will definitely make them successors on earth just as He had made those before them successors. And He will certainly grant strength to them in the religion (Dīn) that He has chosen for them and will certainly replace their fear with peace. They worship Me and do not ascribe any as partner to Myself. Those who are ungrateful thereafter are disobedient indeed. (56) Establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey the messenger so that mercy may be shown to you. (57) Never think that the disbelievers can escape on earth. Their abode is Hell. What an evil return it will be!

THE PROMISE OF SOVEREIGNTY FOR THE BELIEVERS ON EARTH

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 353*) reports from Sayyidina Abul Āliya رحمة الله عليه that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remained steadfast with the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم from the beginning of his the Prophethood. He endured untold sufferings at the hands of the Polytheists and was forced to migrate to Madinah. Even there, the Muslims were still at risk because, added to the danger of the polytheists, the hypocrites and the Jews were also antagonistic towards them.

As a result, they were forced to remain armed at all times. This state of affairs caused someone to say, "When will the day dawn when we will be at peace and not require our weapons?" In response to this, Allāh revealed the above verse viz. *"Allāh has promised those of you who believe and do good deeds that He will definitely make them successors on earth just as He had made those before them successors."*

Allāh promised them that the time was near when He would grant them sovereignty on earth as He gave to Sayyidina Dawūd عليه السلام, Sayyidina Sulaymān عليه السلام and the many leaders of the Bani Isrā'īl.

Sayyidina Mūsa عليه السلام once told the Bani Isrā'īl, *"O my people, remember Allāh's bounty on you when He raised messengers among you and made you kings. He gave you what He never gave anyone in the entire universe."* [*Surah Mā'idah (5), verse 20*]

The realisation of Allāh's promise is based on Belief *(Imān)* and righteous deeds. When the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم complied, they were afforded control of the entire Arabian Peninsula (including Iraq, Syria, etc), followed by conquests in Africa and Asia. They practised Islām and made others do the same.

Allāh promises further that He *"will certainly grant strength to them in the religion (Dīn) that He has chosen for them and will certainly replace their fear with peace."* The Muslims lived in perpetual fear while in Makkah, then again in Madinah. However, Allāh soon alleviated their fears, thereby fulfilling His promise to them.

Allāh then says, *"They worship Me and do not ascribe any as partner to Myself"*

They neither commit shirk, nor do they carry out deeds for any other be sides Allāh.

WHEN THE MUSLIMS VIOLATED ALLĀH'S INJUNCTIONS, THEY LOST THEIR LEADERSHIP

After Allāh fulfilled His promise to the Muslims, they grew lax. Their Belief *(Imān)* decreased, their good deeds began to grind to a halt, and they became lazy in their worship. They then began to lose control of the regions that they once ruled. They were overcome with fear and awe of the enemy and began to beg from the disbelievers so that they may cling on to the last threads of their territories.

Even though Muslim countries occupy vast areas in Africa and Asia, they all lack true Muslim leaders. While some are ruled by the Shias, others have adopted democracy and capitalism, with leaders who may be recognised as Muslims only because of their names. They pander to the dictates of the disbelievers countries and are fighting other Muslim countries.

Allāh says to the Muslims, *"O you who believe, do not take as confidants those besides your own people. These people would spare no pains to ruin you. They wish for that which causes you suffering. Enmity has been manifested from their tongues, but what their hearts conceal is far worse. Indeed We have made the revelation clear to you if you will understand."* As a result of disobeying Allāh and receiving commands from the disbelievers, the Muslim countries are extremely weak and terrified of the disbelievers.

After promising victory to the true Muslims, Allāh says, *"Those who are ungrateful thereafter are disobedient indeed."* The word "disbeliefs" may be translated as 'disbelief' and as 'ingratitude'. Both may apply in this context i.e. the verse may read "Those who are ungrateful thereafter" or "Those who disbelieve thereafter".

The Muslim who is far from the commands of the Shari'ah and neglects all its injunctions is certainly a sinner, even though he may not be called a disbeliever. Allāh will not assist a nation when such people abound, because their only concern is for wealth and position. As a result, they are plunged into perpetual fear for the disbelievers. All the Muslims need is unity in their beliefs and an Amīrul Mu'minīn who adheres to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Allāh will then definitely assist the Muslims if they all become practising believers *(Mu'minīn)* like their illustrious forefathers.

"Establish Salāh, pay Zakāh and obey the messenger so that mercy may be shown to you." This verse spells out the recipe to attract Allāh's mercy and assistance. It simply lies in following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and practising all the physical and financial acts of worship. It is tragic that the Muslims choose rather to follow those disbelievers whom they know to be evil.

"Never think that the disbelievers can escape on earth." The disbelievers will certainly have to suffer Allāh's punishment when it strikes them. This will also come in the form of their deaths, which no person can escape. Thereafter *"Their abode is Hell. What an evil return it will be!"*

THE RAWĀFIDH REJECT THE QUR'ĀN BY HARBOURING ENMITY AGAINST THE SAHĀBAH رضي الله عنهم

One of the sects of the Shias, calling themselves the Rawāfidh, claim to have excessive love for the family of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. However, they are really not happy with Allāh, the Qur'ān, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his family and the illustrious Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. In the above verse of Surah Nūr, Allāh clearly promises the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم that he will confer on them the favour of kingdom and authority. Every person knows that this promise was fulfilled during the reigns of Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

When Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه rightly became the fourth righteous Caliph *(Khalifa)*, he never refuted the rule of previous three and he never claimed that they usurped his right to the Caliphate *(khilāfah)*. He continued in his role, closely emulating the precedent set by them.

The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the righteous khilāfah shall remain for thirty after him. Therefore, upon the demise of Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه, his eldest son, Sayyidina Hasan رضي الله عنه continued as Caliph *(Khalifa)* for a few months until the expiry of the thirty years. He may also be included among the righteous Caliphs *(khilāfahs)*, but the term "four righteous Caliphs *(khilāfahs)*" has been popularly used.

The Rawāfidh, on the other hand, say that the three Caliphs *(khilāfahs)* before Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه were not even Muslims, let alone Caliphs *(khilāfahs)* (Allāh Forbid!). By saying this, they are actually refuting the Qur'ān. They claim that Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه is innocent of all sins [like the Prophets عليهم السلام] and that he is their first Imām. The irony of their belief is that they say that he was afraid to proclaim his right to the Caliphate *(khilāfah)* after the demise of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. By saying so, they are actually calling him a coward (Allāh forbid!).

They also say that he concealed the truth by serving under the three Caliphs *(khilāfahs)*. It is common knowledge that none of their Imāms ever was a Caliph *(Khalifa)* after Sayyidina Hasan رضي الله عنه. Therefore, if it is assumed that Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه, Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه and Sayyidina Uthmān رضي الله عنه were not Muslims (as they say), then it would mean that Allāh's promise was never fulfilled (Allāh forbid!). When this is posed before these Shias, they say that it will be fulfilled when Sayyidina Mahdi appears.

This is another of their disbeliefs. The verse clearly mentions that the promise will be fulfilled to *"those of you,"* whereas no other verse of the Qur'ān contains this phrase together with mention of Belief *(Imān)* and the carrying out of good deeds.

Note: *"Never think that the disbelievers can escape on earth."* This verse refers to all the disbelievers until eternity. They are constantly plotting against the Muslims and leave no stone unturned to destroy the Muslims. However, it is certain that they will receive their just deserts in this world and especially in the Hereafter.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ لِيَسْتَـْٔذِنكُمُ ٱلَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَٰنُكُمْ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا۟ ٱلْحُلُمَ مِنكُمْ
ثَلَٰثَ مَرَّٰتٍ ۚ مِّن قَبْلِ صَلَوٰةِ ٱلْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُم مِّنَ ٱلظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنۢ بَعْدِ صَلَوٰةِ
ٱلْعِشَآءِ ۚ ثَلَٰثُ عَوْرَٰتٍ لَّكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌۢ بَعْدَهُنَّ ۚ طَوَّٰفُونَ عَلَيْكُم
بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (58) وَإِذَا
بَلَغَ ٱلْأَطْفَٰلُ مِنكُمُ ٱلْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَـْٔذِنُوا۟ كَمَا ٱسْتَـْٔذَنَ ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمْ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (59)

(58) O you who believe, your slaves and your children who have not yet come of age must seek permission (to enter your room) on three occasions. Before the Fajr Salāh, when you remove your clothes in the afternoons and after the Isha Salāh. These are three times of seclusion for you. After these, there is no sin on yourselves, or on them. They often come and go from your presence, one from the other. Thus does Allāh elucidate injunctions to you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise. (59) When your children come of age, they should seek permission just as those before them seek permission. In this manner Allāh expounds His verses to you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise.

PERMISSION SHOULD BE SOUGHT BEFORE ENTERING ANY ROOM ESPECIALLY DURING THREE TIMES

Verse 27 of this Surah mentions seeking permission to enter any home. That law applies especially to people who do not live in the same home. The above two verses apply to people who live in the same home and who are constantly in and out of the house.

Allāh says, *"O you who believe, your slaves and your children who have not yet come of age must seek permission (to enter your room) on three occasions (especially). (These three times are) Before the Fajr Salāh, when you remove your (excess) clothes in the afternoons and after the Isha Salāh. These are three times of seclusion for you."* These are times when people usually lie down to rest and want to relax without wearing excess clothing. Couples also usually use these times to lie down together. Permission must be sought before entering the room during these times to ensure privacy.

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه reports that one afternoon the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sent an Ansāri Sahābi رضي الله عنه to call Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه. The Sahabi رضي الله عنه entered without seeking permission and Sayyidina Umar رضي الله عنه was upset because his clothes were dishevelled. The above verse was then revealed.

"After these (three times), *there is no sin on yourselves, or on them* (if they enter without permission). (This is permitted because) *They often come and go from your presence, one from the other."* If they had to constantly seek permission to enter, it would be extremely difficult for all. Therefore, they may enter the house without

permission at other times. Allāh then says, *"Thus does Allāh elucidate injunctions to you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise."*

"When your children come of age, they should seek permission just as those before them seek permission." After coming of age, these children should not think that they are still allowed to enter without permission. They are now adults, and should seek permission to enter like all other adults. Allāh repeats, *"In this manner Allāh expounds His verses to you. Allāh is All Knowing, The Wise."*

Note: Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that people have neglected three verses of the Qur'ān viz.

(1) *"O you who believe, your slaves and your children who have not yet come of age much seek permission (to enter) on three occasions..."*

(2) *"When relatives, orphans and the poor present themselves at the time of distributing (inheritance), then grant them a portion..." [Surah Nisā (4), verse 8]*

(3) *"Verily the most honoured among you is the one with the most piety (taqwa)." [Surah Hujurāt (49), verse 13]*

Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that most people do not practice on these verses, as if they do not believe therein, whereas he would instruct even his slave woman to seek permission to enter during these times.

وَٱلْقَوَٰعِدُ مِنَ ٱلنِّسَآءِ ٱلَّٰتِى لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَن يَضَعْنَ ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَٰتٍۭ بِزِينَةٍ ۖ وَأَن يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

(60) There is no sin on those women who are sitting and have lost all hope of marriage if they remove their (excess) clothing on condition that they do not expose their charms. It is best if they abstain from this, Allāh is All Hearing, All Knowing.

OLD WOMEN NEED NOT CONCEAL THEMSELVES STRICTLY

The Arabic word "qawāid" (translated above as *"women who are sitting "*) refers to those women who are old and remain indoors. Such women, when they are past the age of marriage, are permitted to expose their faces to non-mahram men. However, the condition is that they *"do not expose their charms."* Therefore, they may show only their faces and hands to these men - nothing more. Of course *"It is best if they abstain from this."*

One can understand that if these old ladies are advised to rather not show their faces to non-mahram men, how can a young woman ever be permitted to do so?

لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَىٰٓ
أَنفُسِكُمْ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟ مِنۢ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ ءَابَآئِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أُمَّهَـٰتِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَٰنِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَـٰمِكُمْ أَوْ
بُيُوتِ عَمَّـٰتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخْوَٰلِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ خَـٰلَـٰتِكُمْ أَوْ مَا
مَلَكْتُم مَّفَاتِحَهُۥٓ أَوْ صَدِيقِكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَأْكُلُوا۟
جَمِيعًا أَوْ أَشْتَاتًا ۚ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُم بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا۟ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ
مُبَـٰرَكَةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمُ ٱلْـَٔايَـٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿61﴾

(61) There is no harm for the blind, the paralysed, the ill or for yourselves if you eat from your own homes or from the homes of your fathers, your mothers, your brothers, your sisters, your paternal uncles, your paternal aunts, your maternal uncles, your maternal aunts, the homes for which you possess the keys and the homes of your friends. There is no harm if you eat collectively or individually. So, when you enter any homes, then greet yourselves as a prayer that has been ordained by Allāh and which is blessed and pure. Thus does Allāh explain injunctions to you so that you understand?

THE PERMISSION TO EAT AT THE HOMES OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

"Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" (*v. 3 p. 358*) reports from Sayyidina Sa'īd bin Jubair رحمة الله عليه that the blind and paralysed people used it think that people disliked eating with them. The blind seemed to sense that people thought they ate more than others, while the paralysed people feared that others may feel that they occupy the place of two persons. The above verse was therefore revealed in this regard. Sayyidina Mujāhid رحمة الله عليه says that the verse was revealed to permit eating at the homes of those people mentioned in the verse.

Whatever the circumstances of revelation, the verse is clear that people may eat at the homes of those mentioned because they are all related and will not be offended when the other eats with them. In fact, these relationships are so close that the opposite party will be offended if the other does not eat their food. Therefore, no permission is necessary when a person wishes to eat from the homes of these relatives when he knows that they will not be offended thereby.

The verse also informs us that handicapped people should not be excluded from social activities because of their physical impairment. Some commentators have mentioned that *"your own homes"* refers to the homes of one's children. [*Jalālain*]

If the food is purchased by one's aunts and sisters using their own money,

one needs no permission to eat it. However, one cannot eat from it when the husbands of these relatives paid for the food and they would not be pleased to share it.

".... the homes for which you possess the keys..." Sayyidina Abdullāh bin Abbās رضي الله عنه says that this part of the verse refers to caretakers and guardians of property e.g. shepherds and those who tend orchards may eat or drink from the property that they oversee (milk, fruit). However, they may eat only what is necessary and may not take anything away with them.

Other commentators say that this verse refers to slaves, because the slave and whatever he/she possesses belongs to the master, who may use these as desired.

Allāh also permits that a person may eat from *"the homes of your friends."* This refers only to close friends who will not be offended if a person eats their food.

"There is no harm if you eat collectively or individually." "Ma'ālimut Tanzīl" reports that some of the Ansār رضي الله عنه made up their minds not to eat unless there was a guest with them. They would remain hungry if there was no guest to share their meals. Allāh therefore permitted them to eat alone if no guest was available.

"So, when you enter any homes, then greet yourselves (i.e. the people of the household) *as a prayer that has been ordained by Allāh and which is blessed and pure."* Instead of instructing that Salām (*salutations*) be made to the people of the household, Allāh commands that Salām be made to *"yourselves."* This denotes that all Muslims are like a single soul. Another wisdom behind this phrasing is that when a person prays for peace by greeting another (because Salām is a prayer), the second person replies to the greeting by praying for the one who greeted. Therefore, the person greeting with Salām is actually praying for himself.

Sayyidina Anas bin Mālik رضي الله عنه reports that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When you enter your homes, greet with Salām because it is a blessing for yourselves and for the members of your household." [*Mishkāt p. 399*]

Sayyidina Qatādah رحمة الله عليه narrates that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Greet the members of the household when entering. Then greet them again before taking leave." [*Ibid*]

A detailed discussion of Salām is given in the commentary of verse 86 of Surah Nisā (*Surah* 4). Allāh concludes this discussion by saying, *"Thus does Allāh explain injunctions to you so that you understand."*

إِنَّمَا ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ وَإِذَا كَانُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ عَلَىٰٓ أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا۟
حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُوهُ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِۦ ۚ فَإِذَا
ٱسْتَـْٔذَنُوكَ لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأْذَن لِّمَن شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمُ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ

ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾ لَّا تَجْعَلُوا۟ دُعَآءَ ٱلرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَآءِ بَعْضِكُم بَعْضًا ۚ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنكُمْ لِوَاذًا ۚ فَلْيَحْذَرِ ٱلَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِۦٓ أَن تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

(62) The believers are those who believe in Allāh and His apostle and, when they are with him in a collective matter, they do not depart until they have sought leave from him. Verily those who seek leave from you are the ones who believe in Allāh and His messenger. So when they seek leave from you to tend to some affair of theirs, then permit those of them whom you please and seek Allāh 's forgiveness for them. Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. (63) Do not make the calling of the messenger among yourselves like your calling to each other. Allāh certainly knows those of you who stealthily slip away. Those who oppose the messenger's commands should beware that some calamity or a grievous punishment should afflict them.

THE BELIEVERS LEAVE ONLY AFTER SEEKING PERMISSION FROM THE HOLY PROPHET صلى الله عليه وسلم

"Durrul Manthūr" (*v. 5 p. 60*) reports that during the battle of the trench, the Quraysh camped near the Rūma well, while the Bani Ghatfān tribe camped near Mount Uhud. However they were unable to approach Madinah because the Muslims had already dug the trench.

While the digging was taking place, the hypocrites very reluctantly participated and would secretly steal away after doing very little work. However, the true Muslims assisted to the best of their ability and would leave only because of some genuine reason. Then too, they would first take leave from the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم They would then return as soon as they had completed what they had to do.

In the above verse, Allāh describes this quality of the believers *(Mu'minīn)* and exposes the hypocrites for their ostentation and treachery. This is one of the many occasions where the hypocrisy of the hypocrites is exposed in the Qur'ān.

The hypocrites used to perform their Salāh with extreme reluctance, in a haphazard fashion, and found extreme difficulty in performing the Fajr and Isha Salāh. They performed their Salāh for show and would join the campaigns for Jihād merely to cause trouble for the Muslims, as mentioned in Surah Tauba [*Surah 9, verse 47*]. They were unable to conceal their true identities for long and the Qur'ān often exposed them for what they were.

Describing another trait of theirs, Allāh says in Surah Tauba, *"Whenever a Surah is revealed they look at each other* (saying), *'Can anyone see you?' Then they turn away. Allāh has turned their hearts away because they are nation who do not understand."* [*Surah 9, verse 127*]

The "Marasīl of Abu Dawūd" mentions that when any Sahābah رضي الله عنهم wished to leave the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم gathering because of some reason (like nosebleed), he would indicate to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with

his index finger. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would permit him using a gesture of the hand. As the Sahabi رضي الله عنه left, the Hypocrites would use him as a screen to steal away themselves. About this Allāh revealed the verse, *"Allāh certainly knows those of you who stealthily slip away..."*

Allāh praises the believers *(Mu'minīn)* in these verses. Allāh also says, *"Do not make the calling of the messenger among yourselves like your calling to each other." i.e.* A person should respond immediately to the call of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. When others call a person, he has the choice to respond. However, when the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم called anyone, he had to respond. This was always the practice of the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم. Even when they were called elsewhere, they would remain seated until the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم permitted them leave. The hypocrites, however, looked for every opportunity to sneak away.

Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, *"So when they seek leave from you to tend to some affair of theirs, then permit those of them whom you please..."* Although the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم sought leave only when it was necessary, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was granted the authority to permit them if he willed. This was so because it was possible that they would come to harm if they left, or the matter did not really require immediate attention. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would, therefore, assess the situation before granting leave.

After permitting them to leave, Allāh instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"seek Allāh's forgiveness for them."* Although the need may be urgent, but leaving the collective affair of the Muslims means that one is giving priority to one's personal matters over the matter of religion *(D'īn)*. Even though one may not be sinful for tending to one's needs, the possibility did exist that the matter was not as urgent as it was thought to be. Allowing for this error in judgement, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was instructed to seek forgiveness on their behalf because *"Verily Allāh is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

"Do not make the calling of the messenger among yourselves like your calling to each other." Besides the interpretation mentioned above, commentators have also interpreted this verse to mean that people should not call the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as they call each other. If need be, they should be respectful and say, "O the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or "O the Holy Prophet of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم!" They should never say, "O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم!"

Allāh says in Surah Hujurāt, *"O you who believe! Never raise your voices above the voice of the messenger and do not speak to him loudly as you speak loudly with each other; lest your deeds be laid to waste without you realising."* [*Surah* 49, *verse* 2]

"Those who oppose the messenger's commands should beware that some calamity (in this world) or a grievous punishment (in the Hereafter) should afflict them." This verse specifically addresses the hypocrites who thought nothing of their actions against the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

The verse may be translated to mean Allāh's commands, but even when it is translated as *'the messenger's commands"* it would still denote Allāh's commands because the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم commanded only what Allāh commanded. Allāh says in Surāh Nisā, *"Whoever obeys the messenger has obeyed Allāh."* [*Surah* 4, *verse* 80]

Note: Scholars *(Ulama)* mention that just as it was obligatory for the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم to respond to the call of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Muslims in every era must respond to the call of those people who are in authority over them in the matters of Dīn. These include the Caliph *(Khalifa)*, the Scholars *(Ulama)*, Imāms, principals of religious institutions, trustees of Masājid, those supervising conscription for Jihād, etc.

Note: *"Those who oppose the messenger's commands should beware that some calamity or a grievous punishment should afflict them."* The jurists have deduced from this verse that a command denotes an obligatory action because punishment can be given only for neglecting something obligatory.

However, the words of the verse are general and could pertain to all injunctions of religion *(D'īn)*. Therefore, whenever a general command is issued in the Qur'ān and the Ahādīth, it will be treated as obligatory unless other reasons denote that it is not obligatory, but Sunnah, Mustahab, etc.

The actions of many Muslims are diametrically opposed to Allāh's commands merely because of domestic or social pressure. When they are advised by the Scholars *(Ulama)*, they get annoyed and want to contest the issue. The shaving of the beard is a good example of this. People who shave act in opposition to Allāh's orders and are even prepared to dispute it. There are numerous other examples that also point to destruction, yet people are heedless about their fate in the Hereafter.

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ مَآ أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَيَوْمَ يُرْجَعُونَ
إِلَيْهِ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا۟ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌۢ ﴿64﴾

(64) Lo! Verily to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Allāh certainly knows your condition. On the day when they shall return to Him, He will inform them of what they did. Allāh has knowledge of all things.

EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH BELONGS TO ALLĀH AND HE KNOWS EVERYTHING

This concluding verse of Surah Nūr clearly announces to man saying, *"Lo! Verily to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. (Whatever you do, you should remember that) Allāh certainly knows your condition. On the day* [*of Judgment (Qiyāmah)*] *when they shall return to Him, He will inform them of what they did. (He will then grant them what is because of them because) Allāh has knowledge of all things."*

سورة الفرقان

Makkan	Surah Al-Furqan	Verses 77

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿﴾

تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِى نَزَّلَ ٱلْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَٰلَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ﴿1﴾ ٱلَّذِى لَهُۥ مُلْكُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ شَرِيكٌ فِى ٱلْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ فَقَدَّرَهُۥ تَقْدِيرًا ﴿2﴾ وَٱتَّخَذُوا۟ مِن دُونِهِۦٓ ءَالِهَةً لَّا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ مَوْتًا وَلَا حَيَوٰةً وَلَا نُشُورًا ﴿3﴾ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ إِفْكٌ ٱفْتَرَىٰهُ وَأَعَانَهُۥ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ ءَاخَرُونَ ۖ فَقَدْ جَآءُو ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا ﴿4﴾ وَقَالُوٓا۟ أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ٱكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِىَ تُمْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿5﴾ قُلْ أَنزَلَهُ ٱلَّذِى يَعْلَمُ ٱلسِّرَّ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿6﴾ وَقَالُوا۟ مَالِ هَٰذَا ٱلرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِى فِى ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۙ لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونَ مَعَهُۥ نَذِيرًا ﴿7﴾ أَوْ يُلْقَىٰٓ إِلَيْهِ كَنزٌ أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُۥ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا ۚ وَقَالَ ٱلظَّٰلِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا ﴿8﴾ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا۟ لَكَ ٱلْأَمْثَٰلَ فَضَلُّوا۟ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿9﴾

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

(1) Blessed indeed is the Being Who revealed the Criterion to His bondsman so that he may be a warner to the universe. (2.) The One to Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, Who has not taken any son, has no partner in the Kingdom, has created everything, and then meticulously perfected them. (3) Besides Him they adopt deities who cannot create anything,

but have themselves been created. They have no power to effect any harm nor any benefit to themselves, and do not have any power over life, death or resurrection. (4) The disbelievers say, "This is merely a lie that he has contrived and with which other people have assisted him." They have indeed presented a grave injustice and lie. (5) They say, "Fables of the old men that he has had written and which are recited to him morning and evening. (6) Say, "The One Who knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth has revealed it. Certainly, He has always been the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful." (7) And they say, "What is the matter with this messenger that he eats food and walks in the marketplace? Why is an angel not sent with him to be a warner alongside him?" (8) ". . . Or why is a treasure not given to him or why does he not have an orchard from which he may eat?" The oppressors say, "You are merely following a bewitched man!" (9) Look how they coin similitude's for you! So they wander astray and will not find any road.

ONENESS OF ALLĀH *(TAUHĪD)*, PROPHETHOOD *(RISĀLAH)* AND THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE POLYTHEISTS *(MUSHRIKĪN)*

These opening verses of Surah Furqān describe the Qur'ān, the One Who revealed the Qur'ān, and the one to whom the Qur'ān was revealed. Allāh says, *"Blessed indeed is the Being Who revealed the Criterion (Qur'ān) to His bondsman..."* The Qur'ān is the criterion by which truth is discerned from falsehood and by which the paths of deviation are made distinct from those of guidance.

Allāh revealed the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم *"so that he may be a warner to the universe."* This outlines the task of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. He is the apostle to every man and jinn to be born until Judgment day *(Qiyāmah)*. He was to warn them of the evil consequences that they are bound to face if they fail to accept the truth.

Describing Himself further Allāh says that He is *"The One to Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, Who has not taken any son, has no partner in the Kingdom, has created everything, and then meticulously perfected them."* Allāh created every being perfectly and imbued them with unique qualities and characteristics that are suited to the activities for which they were created.

Allāh has not made the earth so soft that people can sink in it, nor has He made it so hard that it cannot be dug. There are innumerable benefits in the fluidity of water. The air is also similar to water in its fluid movements, yet it is so vastly different, for good reasons. It can reach places where water cannot so that people will not be deprived of it in all places.

Allāh then discusses the preposterousness of the polytheists when He says, *"Besides Him* (Whose description has been given above), *they adopt deities who cannot create anything, but have themselves been created* (by Allāh). (In fact, they are so helpless that) *They have no power to effect any harm nor any benefit to themselves, and do not have any power over life, death or resurrection."* They cannot give life to the dead, cannot give death to the living, nor can they raise the dead on the Day of Judgement.

"The disbelievers say, 'This (Qur'ān) is merely a lie that he [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *has contrived and with which other people have assisted him.*

"Refuting this blasphemy, Allāh says, *"They have indeed presented a grave injustice and lie."*

Some commentators have mentioned that the polytheists were referring to the Jews when they said that *"other people have assisted"* The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. They said that the people of book *(Ahlul Kitāb)* assisted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because these people were aware of the incidents discussed in the previous scriptures. However, their refutation has no effect on the veracity of the Qur'ān.

"They say (about the Qur'ān), *'Fables of the old men that he* [The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم] *has had written and which are recited to him morning and evening."'* Allāh refutes their statement by instructing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to *"Say, 'The One Who knows the secrets of the heavens and the earth has revealed it."* Allāh is perfectly aware of whatever the polytheists and the disbelievers say and will punish them for it.

However, if these people repent for their evils and accept Islām, Allāh will certainly accept them with open arms because *"Certainly, He has always been the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."*

"And they say, 'What is the matter with this messenger that he eats food and walks in the marketplace"' The polytheists thought that the Holy Prophet must be someone different from the rest of humans. However, Allāh has created the Prophets عليهم السلام as humans, like those to whom they have been sent. This is perfectly in order because only a human can understand other humans and practically demonstrate Allāh's injunctions to them.

They also used to say, *"Why is an angel not sent with him to be a warner (against Allāh's punishment) alongside him? Or why is a treasure not given to him or why does he not have an orchard from which he may eat?"* The polytheists wanted to see the above so that they could recognise the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as being different from them. Without any of these, they refused to accept him as Allāh' s apostle.

"The oppressors (also had the audacity to) *say, 'You are merely following a bewitched man!* "They said this when they were unable to reply to the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān.

Allāh then says, *"Look how they coin similitude's for you! So they wander astray and will not find any road."* If they had given the matter due thought, The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Qur'ān would have been a source of guidance for them. However, since they have chosen not to apply their common sense, they have chosen the road of deviation and will not be rightly guided.

تَبَارَكَ ٱلَّذِىٓ إِن شَآءَ جَعَلَ لَكَ خَيْرًا مِّن ذَٰلِكَ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
وَيَجْعَل لَّكَ قُصُورًا ﴿١٠﴾ بَلْ كَذَّبُوا۟ بِٱلسَّاعَةِ ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِٱلسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا
﴿١١﴾ إِذَا رَأَتْهُم مِّن مَّكَانٍۭ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا۟ لَهَا تَغَيُّظًا وَزَفِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَإِذَآ أُلْقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مَكَانًا

ضَيِّقًا مُّقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾ لَّا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا ثُبُورًا
كَثِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾ قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ الْخُلْدِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۚ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ
جَزَاءً وَمَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ خَالِدِينَ ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَّسْئُولًا
﴿١٦﴾

(10) Blessed is that Being Who, if He willed, would have granted you better bounties than this, by way of gardens beneath which rivers flow and He would have made palaces for you. (11) However, they deny Judgment day (Qiyāmah) and We have prepared the Blaze for those who deny Judgment day (Qiyāmah). (12) When it will see them from a distance, they will hear the roar of its fury and its crackling. (13) When they are flung into a narrow place with their hands and feet in shackles, they will cry out for destruction. (14) Do not cry only for one destruction today, but cry for many a destruction. (15) Say, "Is this better, or the Heaven (Jannah) of eternity that the pious have been promised. It shall be a reward and an abode for them. (16) There they shall have whatever they desire and they will live there forever. This is a promise that your Lord has undertaken to fulfill and for which He should be implored.

THE FURY OF HELL *(JAHANNAM)* ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT DAY *(QIYĀMAH)*, WHEN THE DISBELIEVERS WILL BE CAST INTO ITS NARROW CONFINES AND THE PIOUS WILL BE ADMITTED INTO HEAVEN *(JANNAH)*

In the foregoing verses, Allāh tells of how the disbelievers taunted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم by saying that he should have been given gardens and treasures. Allāh now tells them that He has power over all things and can grant him things that are much better than what the disbelievers talk about.

Allāh says, *"Blessed is that Being Who, if He willed, would have granted you better bounties than this, by way of gardens beneath which rivers flow and He would have made palaces for you."* However, Allāh, in His infinite wisdom, grants whatever He wills to whoever He wills. None can question Him about His intentions.

Allāh then speaks about another denial of the disbelievers. Allāh says that, together with their denial of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم apostleship, *"they deny Judgment day (Qiyāmah)"* as well. Because of their denial of the Hereafter, they continue to make absurd remarks about Islām and foster evil within their hearts. Allāh warns them, *"We have prepared the Blaze for those who deny Judgment day (Qiyāmah)."*

On the Day of Judgment *(Qiyāmah)*, *"When it (Hell) will see them from a distance, they will hear the roar of its fury and its crackling."* Hell will be furious with those people whom Allāh is angry with. Its fury will be expressed by the sounds it will emit.

"When they are flung into a narrow place with their hands and feet in shackles, they

will cry out for destruction." Although Hell itself is extremely vast, the people of Hell will be cast into narrow confines. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned that people will be hammered into Hell just like nails are hammered into walls. [*Ibn kathīr v. 3 p. 311*]

Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"We will place yokes upon the necks of the disbelievers. They will be punished only for what they did."* When these people will be cast into Hell, they will cry out wishing for death, thinking that it will save them from the punishment. They will be told, *"Do not cry for only one destruction (death) today, but cry for many a destruction (deaths)."* This will make no difference because they will still suffer the same eternal punishment that is because of them.

Allāh says in Surah Fātir, *"The Fire of Hell will be for those who disbelieve. There (in Hell) no decree will be passed against them by which they may die. Their punishment will also not be lightened. Thus do We punish every disbeliever."* [*Surah 35, verse 36*]

Allāh then instructs the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to tell the disbelievers, *"I this better, or the Heaven (Jannah) of eternity that the pious have been promised. It [Heaven (Jannah)] shall be a reward and an abode for them. There they shall have whatever they desire and they will live there forever."*

This life of the pious will be in direct contrast to the horrible life that the disbelievers will be forced to live in Hell. Allāh says in Surah Saba, *"A barrier will fall between them and the desires they hoped for, just as it occurred to the groups before them. Indeed, they were ever in a confusing doubt."* [*Surah 34, verse 54*]

About the promise of Heaven *(Jannah)* Allāh says, *"This is a promise that your Lord has undertaken to fulfil and for which He should be implored."* Allāh will grant a person this lofty stage of Heaven *(Jannah)* if he earnestly beseeches Allāh for it and works towards it. Quoting the supplication of the intelligent ones, Allāh says in Surah Āl Imrān, *"Our Lord, confer upon us what You have promised us by Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Judgement. Verily You do not break Your promise."* [*Surah 3, verse 194*]

Praying for Heaven *(Jannah)* does not mean that one is doubtful about Allāh's promise, but it expresses one's needs and secures for one the rewards of making supplication *(du'ā)*.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَقُولُ ءَأَنتُمْ أَضْلَلْتُمْ عِبَادِي هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَمْ هُمْ ضَلُّوا السَّبِيلَ ﴿17﴾ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ مَا كَانَ يَنبَغِي لَنَا أَن نَّتَّخِذَ مِن دُونِكَ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَٰكِن مَّتَّعْتَهُمْ وَءَابَاءَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَسُوا الذِّكْرَ وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا بُورًا ﴿18﴾ فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوكُم بِمَا تَقُولُونَ فَمَا تَسْتَطِيعُونَ صَرْفًا وَلَا نَصْرًا وَمَن يَظْلِم مِّنكُمْ نُذِقْهُ عَذَابًا كَبِيرًا ﴿19﴾

(17) The day when they, together with those whom they worship besides Allāh, will be gathered together and Allāh will ask, "Did you lead these bondsmen of

Mine astray, or did they themselves deviate from the path?" (18) They will say, "You are Pure! It did not behove us that we take any allies besides You, but what happened was that You granted enjoyment to their fathers until they forgot the remembrance and were a destroyed nation." (19) "They have falsified what you said and you will neither be able to avert the punishment, nor receive any assistance. We shall inflict a grievous punishment on those of you who are oppressive.

THE QUESTIONS TO BE POSED TO THE FALSE GODS OF THE IDOLATERS, AFTER WHICH THEY WILL BE ENTERED INTO HELL (*JAHANNAM*)

Allāh declares that, on the Day of Judgement, the polytheists, *"together with those whom they worship besides Allāh* [including the angels, idols, Sayyidina Isā عليه السلام and Sayyidina Uzair عليه السلام], *will be gathered together and Allāh will ask* (these 'gods'), *'Did you lead these bondsmen (the Polytheists) of Mine astray, or did they themselves deviate from the path?"'*

In response to Allāh' s question *"They will say,* (O Allāh) *You are Pure! It did not behove us that we take any allies besides You..."* By saying this they would absolve themselves of all blame and reject the worship that was offered to them.

Some commentators say that only the animate and understanding "gods" will be questioned; not the inanimate ones like the idols. However, another group of commentators maintain even the idols and other unintelligible "gods" will be questioned after being given the capacity to understand and speak.

The "gods" will add to their reply by saying, *"but what happened was that You granted enjoyment to their fathers* (causing them to fall deep into the abyss of carnal passions) *until they forgot the remembrance* (of Allāh and the divine scriptures) *and were a destroyed nation."*

Those who worshipped these false gods will be told, *"They* (your gods) *have falsified what you said* (that they were your gods) *and you will neither be able to avert the punishment, nor receive any assistance."* The hopes that the polytheists pinned in their gods will, therefore, be dashed.

"We shall inflict a grievous punishment on those of you who are oppressive." i.e . on those who perpetrate the greatest oppression of disbeliefs.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ لَيَأْكُلُونَ ٱلطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُونَ فِى ٱلْأَسْوَاقِ ۗ وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً أَتَصْبِرُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٠﴾

(20) All the messengers that We sent before you used to eat food and walk in the marketplaces. We have made some of you as trials to others. Will you persevere? Your Lord is Ever Watchful.

THE PROPHETS عليهم السلام USED TO EAT AND WALK IN THE MARKETS, AND EVERY MAN IS A TRIAL FOR THE OTHER

It was mentioned in a few verses prior to this that the polytheists questioned the human nature of the Prophets عليهم السلام and expressed surprise that they could eat and walk about in the markets when the need arose. Allāh replies to this by saying that the behaviour of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was nothing strange because *'All the messengers that We sent before you used to eat food and walk in the marketplaces."*

Allāh had imbued the Prophets عليهم السلام with certain attributes that were befitting for their rank. None has the right to dictate to Allāh what these attributes should be. When Allāh has decreed that the Prophets عليهم السلام should also behave like other humans (which they were), people will be foolish to add that they cannot be humans. It is perfectly reasonable that the Prophets عليهم السلام should be humans to be able to propagate their message to humans.

"We have made some of you as trials to others." Allāh has made some people rich, while others remain poor. The rich are put to trial when they look down upon the poor and say that Allāh must be disliking the poor to make them suffer poverty, while they (the rich) are Allāh's chosen folk. The rich polytheists taunted the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم poverty and asked why was he not given a treasure or an orchard.

Allāh says in Surah An'ām, *"Thus We tested them with each other so that they say, 'These are those whom Allāh has blessed from amongst us."* [*Surah 6, verse 53*]

The rich are also a trial for the poor because, when the poor see the wealth of the rich, they may be overcome with jealousy. Therefore, Allāh asks, *"Will you persevere?"* Each person has to persevere and be content with his lot. [*"Ruhul Ma'āni"]*

"Your Lord is Ever Watchful." He is Aware of those who persevere, as well as those who do not. He will grant them their due retribution.

GLOSSARY

This glossary gives only a breef, introductory meaning of each word and is by no means an authentic dictionary or a full explanation. The meanings given are exactly what the translator has given in the text except for one or two cases here and there.

اعوذ باللہ من الشیطان الرجیم: *(a'udhu billahi minash shaytanir rajim)* I seek refuge in *Allah* from the accursed devil)

انا للہ و انا الیہ راجعون: *(inna lillahi wa inna ilahi raji'un)* see *istarja'*

(رحمہ اللہ): May *Allah* show mercy to him

(رحمة اللہ علیہ): May *Allah* have mercy on him

(رضی اللہ عنہ): May *Allah* be pleased with him

(صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم): May *Allah* bless him and give him peace

(علیہ السلام): May peace be hon him

ان الحمد و النعمة لک والملک لا شریک لک
لبیک اللھم لبیک ، لبیک لا شریک لک لبیک

a'raf,al: the heights, the parapets

aafiyah: safety, goof health and well-being

aal Imran: (the) family of Imran

aalam: all the world, universe

aalamin: universe, all creation

adal: justice, moderation

adhan: the call to prayer, five times a day

ahbar: learned Jewish scholars

ahl suffah: see *ashabus suffah*

ahlul Kitab: people of the Book

ahqab: (pl. of hiqb, q.v)

ajda: a devilish name one whose nose and ears are cut off.

akhirah: hereafter

alam arwah: world of the souls

alastu: (الست) refers to the pledge *Allah* took from all the souls (Am I not your Lord) al-A'raf, 172

alim: singular of *ulama*

amin (pronounced aamin): (exclamation after a prayer meaning) do answer, O *Allah*, let it be so, accept our prayer.

amr bilma'ruf: enjoining the reputable

an'am, al: the quadrapeds

anbiyah: Pl. of *nabi*

anfal, al: the spoils of war. This word *anfal* is the plural of *nafl* (meaning, 'something extra') and anything more than the obligatory is *nafl*. A believer fights for *Allah*'s sake, not for the booty. Hence, when he gets the booty, it is *anfal*.

anfal: booty gained after battle

ansar: supporters who welcomed the *muhajirs* from Makkah

aqd: pledge

asabat: tribes

asbat: successors, grandsons children of (Prophet) Ishaq

ashab us suffah: about 300 poor immigrants who lived on a raised platform in *Masjid Nabawi* devoted to acquiring knowledge and participating in *jihad*

ashab: same as *sahabah*

ashabul faraid: 'people of inheritance,' those liable to receive their shares of inheritance

ashara mubashshara: ten people who were give glad tidings of Paradise

ashura: 10th of *Muharram*

asr: afternoon *(salah)*

aurah: that which the *Shari'ah* has called for being concealed, the intimate parts

awliya: (pl. of wali)

awsat mufassal: are the *surah* from *at-Tariq(86)* to *al-Bayyinah(98)*

ayah (Pl. ayat): sign, verse (of the Quran)

ayat ul Kursi: verse 255 of al-Baqarah

Aws: tribe of Madinah

Azazil: name of Iblis

ba'in (talaq): irrevocable divorce

badanah: large animal, (camels and cattles)

bahirah (بحيرة): a she-camel whose ear was slit by pagan Arabs with supertitions minds

bahirah: the she camel whose ear was cut off when she delivered five foals, the fifth being a male, so that she may not be slaughtered or mounted but allowed to roam about freely. But, *Qatadah* said that the fifth should be a female to allow the distinction

baitul izzah: *Allah's* House on the first heaven, House of honour

baqarah, al: the cow

bara'ah: exoneration

barakah: abundant good, blessing

basmalah: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم *(Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim)* In the name of *Allah* the Beneficent, the Most Merciful)

bayt ul-Ma'mur: a place beneath *Allah's* throne where angels perform *tawaf*

bid: 13th, 14th, 15th of each lunar month when it is rewarding to fast

budn: pl. of badanah

buraq: an animal larger than a donkey and smaller than a horse travelling at speed of lightning. The Prophet ﷺ rode it to the heavens

buruj: stars; (twelve signs of the zodiac)

Bakht Nasr: Nebuchadnezar

Bakkah: another name for Makkah

Bani (or Banu) Isra'il: children of Isra'il

Bid'ah: innovation in religion

dajjal: antichrist

darul harb: enemy territory

dawn: penalty

dhabih: the one offered as sacrifice, Isma'il عليه السلام

dhakirin: those who engage in *dhikr*

dhamil arham: maternal relatives, blood relatives

dhamil qurba: relatives

dhann: assumption, dreams of other people

dhimmi: non-Muslim living in Islamic state under protection

dhul Khalsa: an idol regarded as the Ka'bah of Yeman, pulled down by Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali رضي الله عنه

din: religion

diyah:	blood money
diyah:	bloodhit, blood money
du'a:	prayer, supplication, call
dubur:	west/wind
durud:	invocating blessing on the Prophet
eela:	oath not to approach one's wife for an unspecified time
eid (eed):	festival
eid ul adha:	festival on 10th Dhul Hajjah when a sacrifice is made marking that of Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ
eid ul fitr:	festival marking end of Ramadan when *salah* is offered and before that *sadaqah al-fitr* is paid to the poor.
fa'i:	war booty gained without fighting
fajr:	dawn *(salah)*
fard:	absolutely obligatory, undeniable
fasiq (pl. fasiqun):	disobedient, transgressor, rebellious
fasiq:	open sinner
fatil:	wick a small skin in the cleft of a date stone anything very insignificant.
fatir:	creator, originator
fatrah:	period during which no Prophet or Messenger was sent
fatwa:	ruling on a religious issue
fatwa:	rulings on religions matters given by jurists
fayyi:	booty received by Muslims from disbelievers after a truce, without any fighting
fidyah:	expiation, atonement
fitrah:	nature, moral constitution
furqan:	discerner, that which differentiates
furqan:	discriminator, what distinguishes
fusuq:	sin
Fatihah:	opening
Fir'awn:	Pharaoh
ghamus:	false assertion of having done something in the past.
ghanima:	booty gained after battle
ghislin:	filth from the wounds of inmates of Hell
ghulu:	excesses, exaggeration (in religion)
haddul qadhaf:	punishment for defaming someones accusing him/her of adultery
hadith (pl. ahadith):	Prophet's ﷺ tradition
hady:	animal of sacrifice brought by pilgrim
haidh:	menstruation
hajj akbar:	*Hajj* itself
hajj al badl:	hajj performed on behalf of another
hajj asghar:	the *umrah*
hajr aswad:	The Black Stone
halal:	lawful, permitted
halal:	lawful, permitted
hama/ham/hami:	a she camel dedicated to idols by pagan Arabs
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
haram:	unlawful, forbidden, sacred
hasur:	chaste, abstaining from women, celibate

hawariyyin:	disciples of Sayyidina Isa ﷺ
hidayah:	guidance
hijab:	covering, veil
hijrah:	migration, migration to Madinah
hiqb:	an extreamly long period of time; eighty years each day of which is like a thousand years of this world
hubal:	an idol of the Makkans whose slogan Abu Sufyan raised at the *Uhud*
hudhud:	hoopoe
hullf (حلف):	agreement to assist one another in some matters
hur ayn:	large eyed maidens of Paradise
hur:	maidens of Paradise, (beautiful and fair)
Hajj:	annual pilgrimage which is obligatory on those who can perform it once in lifetime, involving visit to *Makkah, Mina, Arafat* and *Muzdalifah* (and *Madinah*).
Ham:	The stud camel whose 'grandson' impregnated a female, so it gained freedom. Or the stud camel who impregnated female camels ten times. It was set free
Harut/Marut:	two angels sent to try men
i'tikaf:	seclusion for worship - men do it in the mosque while women observe it at home
iblis:	a name of the devil
ibnus sabil:	traveller
iddah:	waiting period for a woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry.
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed
iddah:	waiting period of woman who is divorced or widowed before she may remarry
ifrad:	assuming *ihram* for only *hajj*
ihram:	every pilgrim must assume the *ihram* which makes certain lawful things unlawful to him and calls upon him to don particular dress.
ihsan:	be kind, do in a beautiful way
ihsar:	prevented from making pilgrimage
ijma:	congensus of opinion
ila(ella):	an oath by a husband that he will not have sexual intercourse with his wives
ilham:	inspiration in the heart
illiyyin:	a place above seven heaveans where souls of believers reside
ilm:	knowledge
iman:	faith, belief
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will
insha Allah:	if *Allah* will. This phrase is added everytime one speaks of doing something in future
ira'ahit tariq:	guidance by pointing out the path
irtidad:	apostacy
isal ilal matlub:	delivering to the exact destination
isal thawab:	consigning reward to another person of one's pious deeds
isha:	night *(salah)*
islah:	reformation, correction
isra:	night journey

istabraq: fine silk

istarja: to say انا لله و انا اليه راجعون (to *Allah* we belong and to Him is our return) when faced with difficulty or on loss of a dear one.

istidraj: respite given *Allah* before He seizes finally when the sinner commits sin boldly, step by step, bringing the infidel to hell by degrees

istighfar: to seek forgiveness of *Allah*

istikhara: a prayer to get *Allah's* guidance on some issue of concern

Isra'il (Prophet): Yaqub عليه السلام

jahannum: Hell

jamarah (jamarat): three pillars marking the site where the devil tries to tempt Ismail عليه السلام

jamarah kubra: the last *jamarah*

jamarah ula: the first *jamarah*

jamarah wusta: the middle *jamarah*

janazah salah: funeral prayer

janazah: funeral

jazakAllah: may *Allah* reward you, may *Allah* give you recompense

jibt: idols, name of an idol

jihad: to fight in Allah's cause

Jannah: Paradise

Jizya: tax imposed by Islam an non-Muslims offering them protection

kaffarah: expiation

kashf: a form of Divine inspiration

khums: one-fifth (of booty)

kufr amali: disbelief in deeds

Ka'bah: cube, the building in the centre of the sacred mosque in Makkah around which pilgrims circumambulate, and which worshippers face in their *salah.*

Kaffarah: expiation

Kafir: disbeliever, infidel

Kalalah: a dead person who leaves neither father nor son but a brother or a sister

Karamah: a wonder

Kawthar: the Prophet's pond in the hereafter at which he stand and only the truly pious will be allowed to drink so that they will never feel thirsty

Khalil: friend

Kharaj: a tribute on land

Khazraj: tribe of Madinah

Khula: divorce given by a husband on his wife's initiative

Khulafa (s. Khalifah): Caliphs

Khulafa Rashidun: righteous caliphs

Khutbah: sermon

Kiraman Katibin: angels who record a person's deeds/words

Kitabah: a slave's agreement to buy his own freedom from his master through regular payments

Kuffar: (pl. of *Kafir*)

Kufr: disbelief, to conceal (truth)

Kun (كن): 'Be,' when *Allah* intends anything, He says *Kun* and it is.

la'n: curse

laat: a generous man Amir bin Zarb who fed travellers and was a judge. When he died Amr bin Luhay, made an idol of him. It was pulled down by Abu Sufya bin Harband ﷺ Mughira bin Shibah ﷺ

labayk: the pilgrim recites after assuming the *ihram*

laghw: futile, oath, meaningless, vain

laylatul qadar: the night of power which is the night in *Ramadan* when the Qur'an was revealed

lia'n: a couple who invoke *Allah's* curese on each other when the husband accuses his wife of immorality and she denies

lowhul mahfuz: preserved tablet

Laylatul jinn: the night when the *jinn* listened to the Qur'an and the Prophet's ﷺ sermon

ma'idah, al: the tablespread

mabrur: sinless

mahr mithal: dower (customary or) in force in the family

mahr: dower

mahram: a near relative with whom it is unlawful to marry, one with whom it is always unlawful to marry

makruh tahrimi: disapproved almost to the point of unlawfulness

makruh tahzihi: disliked in order to purify, withdraw out of *taqwa*, abstain

makruh: disliked, reprehensible, not approved

manasik: rites of *hajj*

maqamul Mahmud: praisworthy station

mashwarah: consultation

masjid: mosque

mathani: the *surahs* from *surah Yunus* to *al-Hujrat*

mawdihatul hasanah: beautiful exhortations

mawlal mawalat: two people made a contract to help pay one another's penalty, if any, and to inherit from one another, each of these was so called

maytah: carrion, animals that die a natural death

mi'raj: ascension to the heavens

mihrab: sanctuary, place of worship, a riche in the mosque (for the imam), a place of battle (like against the devil)

mirain: *Surahs* that contain a little more than a hundred verses

miswak: a fine tuig for brushing teeth

mu'allaq: an attached vow

mu'anaqa: to embrace

mu'awwadhatayn: last two surahs of the Qur'an al-Falaq and an-Nas

muadhdhin: one who calls the *adhan*

mubahalah: two or more opposing parties invoke curse on the wrongdoer.

mufassal: the *surahs* from *Qaf(50)* to the end of the Quran are socalled

mufrid: who performs *ifrad hajj*

mufti: jurisprudent, scholar who is eligiable to give religions rulings *(fatwa)*

muhaddith (pl. muhaddithin): scholar of *hadith*
muhajir (muhajirun/muhajrin): emigrants
muharramat abadiyah: women whom a man can never marry
muharramat musaharah: women whom a man cannot marry because of marriage ties
muharramat nasabiyah: women whom a man cannot marry because of close relationship
muharramat rada'iyyah: women whom a man cannot marry because of suckling
muhkamat: clear, comprehensive verses of the Qur'an
muhsin: a Muslim adult, free, married person who has consumated his or her marriage. If any of them commits, adultery then he or she must be stoned to death
muhsir: one who is prevented
mujahadah: stuggle between two; thus a persons struggle against his carnal self to better his hereafter
mujahid: warrior
mulhid: athiest, disbeliever
munadi: one who calls out loudly, proclaimer, herald
munafiq: hypocrite
munafiqun: pl. of *munafiq*
munajat: quiet supplication to *Allah*
muqantarah: huge proportions
muqatta'at, huruf: abbreviated letters like (الم *alif laam meem*) in the first verse of 29 *surah*
muqtadi: one who follows the *iman* in *salah*
murtad: apostate
murtahin: receiver
musafaha: to shake hands
musafir: traveller
mustahab: desirable, recommended, that which was observed by the Prophet ﷺ sometimes and omitted sometimes.
mut'ah: temporary marriage
mutashabihat: allegorical verses of the Qur'an whose meaning is known to *Allah* alone, example: 'The Most Merciful is firm on the throne' (surah TaHa, 5)
mutashabihat: allegorical, figurative, co-similar, difficult to fathom.
mutlaq: a genaral vow
muttaqin (pl. of muttaqi): those who fear *Allah,* who observe *taqwa*
muttaqin: abstinent, pious those who fear *Allah*
muwahhid: a monotheist
Ma'ruf: righteousness reputable
Maghrib: sunset (*salah* after)
Manat: Banu Hudhayl and Banu Khuza'ah made this idol and made offering to it as a means of nearness to *Allah*
Manna: *Allah's* blessing sent to *Banu Isra'il* like white sugar, with *salwa*
Maqam Ibrahim: Station of Ibrahim, عليه السلام the rock on which he stood while building the *Ka'ba*
Maqam ul Mahmud: the praisworthy station
Maryam: worshipper (against verse 37 Aal Imran), mother of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام

Mash'arul Haram:	where rites of *hajj* are performed at *Muzdalifah*
Mu'min (Pl. mu'minun):	believer
Mubahalah:	invoking curse on the apposing party who is said to be the wrong-doer, mutual imprecation
Mukatab:	slave who enters into a Kitabah
Mukatabah:	same as Kitabah
Mun'aqida:	promise to do or not do something in the future
Munkar:	rejected, disreputable
Mushrik (Pl. mushrikun):	polytheist
Mutawatir (ah):	continuously handed down
Muttatu:	who perfroms *tamattu hajj*
naat:	poem in prise of the Prophet ﷺ
nabi:	Prophet
nabi:	a Prophet with no new *Shari'ah* or Book
nabuwah:	Prophethood
nafkh:	breath (of Jibril)
nafl:	optional
nafs:	base self
nahi an almunkar:	forbid the disreputable
najashi:	negus, the king of Abyssinia/Ethiopia
najwa:	secret meeting
naml:	ants
nasara:	christians
nasran:	same as *nasara*
nasrani:	singular of *nasara/nasran*
nazghun:	temptation
nifaq:	hypocrisy
night of qadr:	see *laylatul qadr*
nisa, an:	the women
nisab:	the amount of gold, silver, currency, wealth or property that attracts payment of *zakah*
nisab:	the minimum property or wealth that attracts payment of *zakah*
noqir:	tiny spot on a date pit; something very insignificant.
nur:	light
Nahl-an:	the bee
Nijr-Al:	capital city of the *Thamud*
Paraclete:	one who people praise exceedingly (which is Muhammad in Arabic)
qada:	lapse, missing a fard and making up later.
qarin:	who performs *qiran hajj*
qasas:	story
qati:	clear commands in dreams
qawa'id:	old women who remain indvors and past age of marriage
qibla:	the direction (of the *Ka'ba*) which worshippers face in their *salah*
qiran:	assuming *ihram* for both *umrah* and *hajj*, performing the *umrah* but not giving up the ihram, and after performing hajj, when due, shaving head and discarding the *ihram*
qisar mufassal:	the *surah* from *az-Zilzal(99)* to *an-Nas(114)* are so called

qisas"	retaliation
qitmir:	pellice, date stone, anything on no value
qunut:	stand in humility
Qasr (salah):	shortened *salah*
Qintar:	large wealth, 42,000 ooqiya or 4,80,000 dirhams
Qiyamah:	Day of Resurrection
ra'd:	thunder
rabb (Pl. arbab):	Lord
rabbaniyun:	those of *Allah*, who are attached to *Allah*
rabitu:	attach to a task dedicatedly, preparing beast for battle, guarding borders of Islamic state
rahn:	pledge
raj'i (talaq):	revocable divorce
rajam:	stoning married adulterer to death
rami:	pelting stones at the *jamarat*
rasul:	Messenger
rasul:	messenger who is a Prophet with a new *Shari'ah* and a new Book
rawafid:	the *shias*
rayhan:	nourishment, fragrant plants, flowers sustenance
risalat:	messengership, office of a Messenger
ruh:	spirit, mercy (commentary on verse 170/171 surah Nisa), inspiration
ruku':	bowing posture in the *salah*
Rahim, ar:	The most merciful, (attribute of *Allah*)
Rahman ar:	The Beneficent, The Merciful (attribute of *Allah*)
Ruhul Qudus:	appelation of Jibril ﷺ
saba:	wind that blows from east to west
sabian:	(1) worshippers of angels (2) fire-worshippers who were also Jews and Christians (3) had no religion but believed in *Allah*
sabr:	patience
sadaqah:	charity
sadaqatul fitr:	charity given after end of the month of fasting (Ramadan)
sadhu:	Hindu ascetic
saff:	row
sajdah:	prostration
salam:	greeting
salatul duha:	optional *salah* after sunrise
salatul fath:	optional *salah* on gaining victory
salatul khawf:	*salah* performed while in fear
salatul wusta:	the *salah* between others, midmost *salah*
salihin:	righteous
salihun (pl. of salih):	righteous
sayyidut-tabi'in:	a title of Uwais Qarni given to him by the Prophet ﷺ for, though he embraced Islam in his times, he could not meet him because he tended to his ailing mother
shafa 'atul uzma:	the great intercession for everyone
shafi:	cure
shafiyah:	cure
shahid:	martyr, witness
shirk:	polytheism

shuhada:	Pl. of *shahid*
shukr:	gratitude
sidratul muntaha:	a lotus or jujube tree over the seventh heaven near Paradise at the limit beyond which is nothing
sijjin:	a place beneath seven earths where souls of disbelievers are kept
siqayatul hajj:	providing water to the pilgrims
sirat:	a very narrow, slippery bridge over hell which the believers will cross over swifty but the infidesls will fall into hell
siratul mustaqim:	the right path
siwak:	see *miswak*
sunnah:	practice of the Prophet ﷺ
sa'ibah (سايبة):	a slave or an animal set free for the sake of an idol
sa'iqah:	thunderclap, lightning bolt
sab'u tiwal:	the lengthy *surahs* in the begining after *al-Fatihah* - from *al-Baqarah* to *at-Taubah* or *Bara'a*
Sa'i (سعى):	the seven rounds between *Safa* and *Marwah*, the two hillocks, by the pilgrims.
Sa'ibah:	If a camel bore ten foals she qualified for exemption from work and from being milked. Her hair was cut off to mark her. But some said that it was a camel dedicated to an idol and the custodian slaughtered her and gave its meat away
Sabt:	Sabbath
Sadanatul bayt:	to unlock and lock the door of the *Ka'bah*
Saffat, as:	The rangers, the angels
Sahabah:	companions of the Prophet ﷺ (pl. of *sahabi*)
Sahabi:	s. of *sahabah*
Sahifah:	scriptures in a smaller form
Salah:	regular prayer, form of worship made up of different postures and recitals, physical worship, also invoking blessing on the Prophet ﷺ
Salwa:	*Allah's* blessing to *Banu Isra'il*, quails
Sha'air (شعار) (pl of شاعرة sha'irah):	Signs, to kens
Shari'ah:	Islamic law as prescribed by the *Qur'an* and the *hadith*, the way the religion is observed.
Shaybi:	custodian of the keys of the *Ka'bah*
Shaytan:	Satan, the devil
Shuh:	riggardliness
Siddiqun (Siddiqin):	truthful
Sirat ul mustaqim:	straight path
Sufiyah:	*sufis*, mystics
Sundus:	fine silk
Surah (Pl. Suwar):	Chapter (of the Quran)
Taybah:	another name of Madinah
ta'awwudh:	seeking refuge in *Allah* in the words
tabi'un/tabi'in (s. tabi'i):	successors of the *sahabah*, ﷺ epigones
tafaqqu:	attain deep understanding of religion
tafsir birra'iy:	interpretation based on own opinion
tafsir:	commentary, explanation, interpretation
taghabun:	mutual loss and gain
tahajjud (salah):	*Salah* offered voluntarily in the dead of the night

when others are asleep

tahiyyah: greeting, prayer, *salam*

tahlil (تحليل): to make lawful

tahlil (تهليل): to say *La ilaha illAllah*

tahmid: praise of *Allah*

tajwid: science of recital of the *Qur'an* with correct articulation and punctuation.

takbir (pl. takbirat): to say *Allahu Akbar*

talaq: divoce given by a husband to his wife on his own

talaq: divorce

talbiyah: reciting *labayk* during pilgrimage

tamattu: assuming *ihram* for *umrah* during months of *hajj* and having performed it, assuming *ihram* for *hajj* on the 8th of Dhul Hajjah

tanfil: proclamation that warriors may retain to themselves whatever booty they acquire, the booty being called *nafl*.

taqdir: fate, Divine decree

taqiyya: expression of what one really disagrees with, lying in religion - a shi'a belief

taqwa: righteousness, a God-fearing attitude

tariqah: a path, religious life as seen by the *sufis*

tasawwuf: sufism mysticism, intense love of *Allah* and the Prophet ﷺ, and obedience to them

tasbih: to glorify *Allah*

tashahhud: at-tahiyyat recited in the sitting posture in salah and forms the words recited during the mi'raj

tasmiyyah: to recite the basmalah

taubah: repentance

taubah: repentance

taught: rebellious conduct, false god, idol

tawaf: circum ambulation of the *Ka'ba*

tawaffa: to raise souls, to lift something completely, to put something to sleep, to grant death to someone

tawakkul: trust in *Allah*

tawhid: oneness of *Allah*, monotheism

tayammum: dry ablution when water is unavailable or use of it is harmful

tiwal mufassal: are the *surah* from *Qaf(50)* to *al-Buruj(85)*

tuhr: purity apposite of menstruation

Ulama: Scholars (of religion)

Umrah: Optional pilgrimage of a lesser nature.

umm: Mother, chief

ummah (Pl. umam): Community, followers/people of a Prophet.

ummul qura (mother of all villages): a name of Makkah

ququl walidain: disobedience to parents and causing them grief and hardship

ushr: a tenth, payable on produce

uzza: a female devil who visited three accacia trees in Batn Nakhla, an idol carved by Zalim bin As'ad, destroyed by Khalid bin Walid ؓ

wahy: to cost into the heart, to reveal, to inspire

wajib: obligatory to a degree lesser than *fard*

wali:	friend of *Allah*, man of *Allah*
wali:	friend, helper
wasata:	best, just, reliable
wasilah (وصيلة):	a female animal (camel or ewe) honoured to the idols by observing some superstition
wasilah:	It was a goat that bore seven kids. Only males could use her and upon her death, both males and females ate from her carcos
wassiyah:	bequest
wazifah:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wird:	rota of recital, remembrance, supplication
wudu:	ablution to gain purity (before offering *salah* for instance)
Yahud:	name of Jews because they repented from calf worship
Yathrib:	original name of Madinah
yasin:	O men! A name of the Prophet ﷺ
yastambituna:	'People with insight' but literally 'to extract water from the depths of the earth,' hence, those who can unearth the truth
yamin:	oath
yaqin:	conviction
Zamzam:	a well in *Makkah* of incessant water of *zamzam*, discovered by Abdul Muttalib and originally scraped by an angel for Prophet Isma'il عليه السلام
Zaqqum:	a bitter tree in hell
Zuhr:	midday *(salah)*
Zulumat (pl.):	darkness, falsehood
zakah:	charity prescribed at a certain rate on those holding a certain amount of assets called *nisab*, worship of financial form
zihar:	telling one's wife, "You are to me like my Mother's back

INDEXES

There are three different sets of index, an index of names appearing in the commentary, an index of subjects in the commentary, and, an index of books to which the commentary refers but the major books of hadith like Bukhari, Muslim, etc. are not mentioned. The numbers against each entry refer to the pages and an 'f' following a number implies that the entry is repeated on that page or up to five following pages.

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Anwar ul-Bayan

Mawlana Ashiq Ilahi Bulandshahri رحمة الله عليه is a renowned, recognised religious authority. He was a prolific writer and there are a number of books to his credit covering a wide range of religious subjects. His commentary on the Qur'an, Anwarul ul-Bayan, speaks highly of his deep knowledge and learning. He has written an exhaustive commentary on each surah of the Qur'an – nay on every ruku' or section and quoted earlier authorities. His work is interspersed with the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sayings and with interpretations of the learned *sahabah* رضي الله عنهم اجمعين like Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, Ali ibn Abu Talib رضي الله عنه and Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه and the notable *tabi'in* like Abdullah Ibn Mubarak رحمة الله عليه, Hasan Busri رحمة الله عليه, etc.

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